THE SOUTH LOOKS AT ITS PAST

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AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

TO

CHARLES A. BEARD

TEACHER AND FRIEND

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INTRODUCTION

THIS IS NOT A HISTORY OF THE SOUTH. IT IS AN INTERpretative study of those phases of the South's past that seem most pertinent to a fresh orientation in this age of dilemmas. An outgrowth of the authors' interest in the new regionalism, it is based upon the assumption that indigenous to each region are certain historic and traditional culture patterns, certain physical and social capacities and limitations, all of which must be taken into account in any rational scheme for a better order of life. In other words, to arrest the drive toward dead levels of uniformity, to promote in each section and locality the development of its own best culture traits as well as physical capacities, and thus perhaps to restore something of the interesting variety that once gave richness and color to the American scene : this is the essence of the new regionalism.

The point has been felt with particular force in the South. For despite its wide sub-regional divergencies, the South does have a unity and distinctiveness more marked than any other section. The former slavehold-

ing States, and to a greater extent those which formed the Confederacy, have inherited traditions, ideals, and attitudes which constitute, on the one hand, a heritage that should not be pushed aside, and on the other, a cumbrance of problems and besetments that can be properly understood only in their historical setting. The country has never been entirely unaware of this fact, to be sure, but the perturbing developments of the early nineteen-thirties brought forth a demand, unusually insistent, for a new orientation with reference to our common life, and many thoughtful Southerners in particular have been taking stock of their own region. Some have studied its multiform features as seen through the intimate focus of the close-up. Others have considered it in perspective and with reference to national and worldwide trends. Some quite distinctly, and all in a measure, have been mindful of its social and cultural inheritance.

In view of this wide and purposive interest, it seems worth while to review and interpret from our present perspective those phases of the inheritance most pertinent to contemporary conditions and problems. In attempting this task we have drawn freely upon the many excellent studies already made on particular phases of our subject but have used original sources for much illustrative data. As our purpose is somewhat impressionistic, we have tried to select and interpret our material with a view to its present-day significance and have projected the whole upon a small enough canvas to give a unified effect.

What the average Southerner has in mind when he thinks of the South's "past" is the glorified picture which tradition has painted of "the good old days before the war"—meaning, of course, the Civil War. Perhaps he may also have in mind the conflict itself, "the times that tried men's souls," when Southern chivalry gloriously shed its life's blood for the right to live on; and then the woeful aftermath, when all that was left of the flower and fruit of that chivalry was basely blighted by the plague of the carpetbaggers and scalawags. For our purpose, this traditional past is fully as important as the actuality, in that it lies at the basis of Southern ideals and attitudes.

It is true that the Old South developed a number of traditions, each with its own variations. The slaves, the "poor whites," the mountaineers, the yeoman farmers, as well as the planter "aristocrats," all developed their several patterns. But the idealization of the section's rural life in general and that of the dominant planter class in particular became fairly standardized in the latter half of the nineteenth century and became the predominant pattern in Southern ideology.

The traditional conception of life in the Old South is particularly important for the reason that it singles out and idealizes the most admirable features of that life. Much emphasis is placed upon its humanism, as contrasted with the Puritanism assumed to have characterized the North. The planter "aristocracy" is alleged to have inherited the cultural tastes and the joy of living of its "Cavalier" forebears. These were re-

flected in homes of chastely classical architecture, sumptuously but tastefully furnished, and environed with gardens and groves resplendent with moonlight and magnolias, romance and roses. Well stocked libraries afforded a retreat for the enrichment of one's culture with classical lore in the intervals between stately entertainings or rollicking house parties. Mint juleps were always in the picture, but a gentleman knew how to carry his liquor. A certain wholesome dignity and regard for the amenities of life placed such merriment on a plane far removed from the vulgar display of the modern newly rich. In fine, the old South gentry is said to have developed an art of living more charming and colorful and at the same time more refined and elegant than has yet appeared elsewhere in this country.

And despite its idealizations the tradition is by no means wholly fictitious. It errs in suggesting a much wider prevalence of gentility than actually existed and in concealing or favorably distorting the uglier features of plantation life. But in romantically portraying that life at its best it accentuates significant truths which the ultra-realist is likely to ignore. There is ample evidence that a relatively few families in the Old South developed a type of life which the tradition but little exaggerates and that these were highly influential in shaping the ideals of lesser folk. No class from the slaves up was wholly unaffected by their standards. If only a few hundreds of families had closely approximated such standards, many thou-

sands of others aspired to them with varying success. The numbers of these and the sweep of their influence were steadily growing when the Civil War interrupted the process.

In fact, a balanced view of the Old South reveals a paradoxical picture, mottled with highlights and deep shadows. There was a social brilliance, charmingly gay and colorful; an appreciation of the best classical culture; a refinement, elegance, and gracious hospitality. There were also the blight of slavery; the tragedy of the "poor whites"; and the curse of ignorance, prejudice, and superstition. There was a wholesome family pride that naturally went with good breeding, and there was insufferable snobbery. There was chivalry at its best and swashbuckling at its worst. In the population as a whole crudeness was far more prevalent than gentility. And yet withal there was a pervasive kindliness, a readiness to accommodate stranger or friend, a sportive love for the great out-of-doors, and a leisurely enjoyment of life. Among the better type of planters at least, the business of acquiring wealth was quite subordinate to the art of living. Toward inferiors they showed an inherent spirit of *noblesse oblige*, which though condescending to a degree was generally hearty and often magnanimous.

This is not to assume that such virtues were confined to the South. Many good things in the Southern way of life were to be found in ample measure in other parts of the country and in some respects to a higher degree among certain classes in Europe. It is

not our purpose to compare their prevalence by sections or countries. We are concerned with the South's heritage from its past and the extent to which it has been added to or taken from by subsequent metamorphoses. No thoughtful person would bring back that past in its entirety if such were possible; but, as Stark Young has said, "out of any epoch in civilization there may arise things worth while, that are the flowers of it. To abandon these, when another epoch arrives, is only stupid, so long as there is still in them the breath and flux of life." [1]

On the other hand, a sympathetic understanding of the present South is impossible without a frank recognition of the darker as well as the brighter side of its past. The South still lives in the shadow of the old plantation. Tenant farmers, share croppers, mill workers—white and black—are more oppressed by that shadow than inspired by such flickerings as remain of the genteel virtues. If the paternalism of the Southern mill village, like that of the present plantation, inherits something of the old spirit of *noblesse oblige*, it also perpetuates the implicit dominion of the master of slaves. Certain types of mill superintendents and foremen, plantation overseers, and chain gang bosses of today are the spiritual if not the biological descendants of slavery-time overseers. The prevailing race prejudice in the South is understandable only in the light of the conditions and status of the Negro under slavery, the effect upon Southern attitudes produced by the bitter controversy regarding it, and

more especially those which arose from Reconstruction experiences. Southern sensitiveness to outside criticism stems in large measure from the Abolitionist crusade and the carpet-bag invasion. The failure of critics and reformers to understand these historical backgrounds largely accounts for the woeful miscarriage of their usually well-meant and often commendable efforts to promote justice and righteousness as they conceive them.

The South's reaction to the Abolitionist onslaught led to the development of a powerful defense mechanism and a fierce intolerance toward any adverse criticism of its "peculiar institution." What had before been frankly recognized as a "necessary evil," which should be mitigated and gradually eliminated, became "the ideal basis of a perfect civilization." Threatened with the loss of their largest property investment, stirred to wrath by the "calumny of base detractors," and haunted by exaggerated fears of bloody slave insurrections, the planters completely lost sight of the fine Jeffersonian principle of freedom of conscience, speech, and press on that inflammable subject. Abolitionist propaganda in the South was outlawed, and even such dispassionate criticism of slavery as had once been prevalent in the section could no longer be publicized with impunity. From pulpit, press, and platform a defensive attitude toward the subject was demanded and all but universally obtained. Did any apostate Southerner dare transgress in this matter or show sympathy with outside calumnia-

tors he was likely to be ostracized if not mobbed. This attitude not only left a trail of intolerance and hypersensitiveness, but also accounts in large measure for the decline of Southern creative thought in the last two or three decades of the ante-bellum era in all fields other than the defense of slavery and States' rights, and for the persistence of ultra-conservatism in the section thereafter.

The unfortunate experiences of Reconstruction accentuated both the South's sensitiveness to outside interference and criticism and its already ingrown conservatism, much more than did the war itself. The war wrecked its economic system and left it in all but hopeless poverty and financial dependence for years to come; it precipitated social problems that have defied solution. But Reconstruction was more productive of unfortunate psychological attitudes. It greatly heightened the prejudice against radical, and even liberal "meddlers" in general and against "Yankee agitators" in particular. It produced the fetish of the Solid South Democracy—unfortunate enough for the nation but even more so for its ossifying effect upon political, social, and cultural progress in the Southern States.

But the conservatism of the "Bourbon" Democracy in the years that followed Reconstruction was less and less that of the planter and more and more that of the business man. As farming was relatively unprofitable for at least a generation, such planters as survived the debacle and retained social and political prestige drew

their profits from the business of supplying their tenants and neighboring small farmers by means of credit accounts, and often from fortunate connections with rising industrial enterprises. Agriculture as such was doomed to a subordinate and impotent rôle in the new order to be exploited by industry, trade, and finance.

To the new leadership the South's past was now but a sacred memory, deserving of a tear and a eulogy upon memorial occasions. Her former civilization, "once splendid but medieval," must now give place to "progress and prosperity." She must set about quickly to exploit her neglected resources, physical and human. Such a movement was doubtless inevitable and in many ways desirable. It seems unfortunate, however, that in the redressing of the balance, business was given an overwhelming position against agriculture. The ideals and standards of the former were accepted with little effective criticism; while those of the latter, as bequeathed from the Old South, were submerged. Indeed it may be held that the better features of the old order succumbed more fully, while the uglier ones, in altered forms, were more persistent.

But the old order did not die without a struggle. From the Civil War to the end of the century agrarian interests and ideals maintained an obstinate but losing fight for survival. Many members of the generation born before the war lived in the fond hope that their idealized past would come back. Manfully did they

struggle against inexorable forces to bring it back, but the "Lost Cause" was doomed to be lost again and forever. These were scarcely less critical of the South's past than the champions of the new order were of the future which they envisaged through conformity to the national pattern.

By 1900 the New South movement had become irresistible. Rising prosperity and expanding educational opportunities were effective answers to the few remaining critics of the new régime. Education had become one of the cardinal doctrines of the New South creed, and achievements in this field were among its most creditable results, though they were marred by the naïve assumption that schooling and education are synonymous. The ideals of the business man were accepted in this matter as uncritically as they were in the social and economic order. Prior to the depression of the 1930's at least, such criticism as appeared was of little avail, except that which made for mild ameliorations. The disillusionments of the past few years, however, have opened the eyes of many to questions more basic.

How can we best devote to the common good what remains of our "boundless resources"? How can we emancipate man from slavery to the machine and enslave the machine for the service of man? Can the South develop a new regionalism, free from the evils of the old sectionalism, yet mindful of the best in its own social and cultural heritage?

CHAPTER ONE

THE OLD SOUTH, TRADITIONAL AND REAL

THE CIVILIZATION OF THE OLD SOUTH WAS ONE "OF manifold excellences—perhaps the best that the Western Hemisphere has ever seen—undoubtedly the best that These States have ever seen. Down to the middle of the last century, and even beyond, the main hatchery of ideas on this side of the water was across the Potomac bridges. . . . In the South there were men of delicate fancy, urbane instinct and aristocratic manner—in brief, superior men—in brief, gentry. To politics, their chief diversion, they brought active and original minds. It was there that nearly all the political theories we still cherish and suffer under came to birth. It was there that the crude dogmatism of New England was refined and humanized. It was there, above all, that some attention was given to the art of living—that life got beyond and above the state of a mere infliction and became an exhilarating experience. A certain noble spaciousness was in the ancient southern scheme of things. The *Ur*-Confederate had leisure. He liked to toy with ideas. He was hospitable

and tolerant. He had the vague thing that we call culture." [2]

This encomium of Mencken's may well be taken as our point of departure. It appeared in "The Sahara of the Bozart" and was used with telling effect to sharpen by contrast his caustic diatribe on the banality and cultural aridity of the New South. In elaborating his theme Mencken assumes that these "manifold excellences" were in the blood, that the Southern "aristocracy" sprang from the English gentry and preserved biologically, if not the culture itself, at least the ability to perpetuate and develop that culture. He assumes that the rest of the white population was composed from the first of "poor whites," as fatally handicapped biologically as the gentry was gifted. From this inherently vulgar stock he traces the "yokelry" and "Babbittry"—in short the "boobocracy"—which, he thinks, unfortunately supplanted the defunct aristocracy in the South.

Though Mencken departs in the end from the usual Southern tradition, he is quite in accord with it in ascribing such excellent qualities to the planter class. And that is the point with which we are at present concerned. In fact, as in fiction, this class dominated the life of the Old South almost as completely as the lordly aristocracy from which it allegedly sprang dominated feudal England. The tradition which grew up around it and the culture pattern associated with it affected more or less profoundly all classes, giving vicarious enjoyment to those who had little or no

hope of attaining its standards. Hence the emphasis which we place upon this class. Its traditions are recalled, correctives are offered where they seem to be needed, then other phases of life in the Old South are briefly interpreted.

Driven to the westward passage by the law of primogeniture and the lure of a new continent, scions of the English nobility and gentry are said to have reproduced in the South the best traditions of the Old World, broadened and strengthened by the fresh environment of the new. In the culture patterns thus formed were harmoniously blended the philosophic tone, forensic power, and architectural grace of the ancient Greek; the practical statesmanship of the Roman; the chivalry of the medieval knight; the cultural taste and joy of living of the humanist; the love of personal freedom of the Anglo-Saxon; and the virilizing, democratizing influence of the frontier. Such patterns were not only embodied in the life of the Southern planter but were also reflected in the ideals and standards of lesser folk.

From the time when the first plantations were established on the James, the virginal valleys of tidewater Virginia offered to the younger sons of the English aristocracy opportunities to develop estates for themselves and their heirs as princely as those which their oldest brothers inherited at home. In turn their own younger sons acquired other expansive domains along the adjacent waterways or else moved

farther inland until the limits of navigation were reached. By the time the fertile, accessible lands of Virginia and Maryland were taken up, still other younger sons, including new recruits from England, were leading fresh retinues of redemptioners and Negro slaves into the Carolinas, and later into Georgia. The influx of blue blood from the Mother Country practically ceased before the Revolution, hence it was left to native progeny to extend the aristocratic hegemony beyond the mountains and over the Gulf States to Texas.

Tradition lays particular stress upon the alleged fact that the floodtide of aristocratic migration to the South came during the seventeenth-century struggles in England between their own class, the proud Cavaliers, and their age-old adversaries, the Puritans, and reached its height during the Puritan tyranny of the interregnum. This accentuates the dramatic element of conflict and affords an opportunity for contrasting the gloomy, bourgeois, grasping, self-righteous Puritans who settled New England with the gay, aristocratic, hospitable, humanist Cavaliers who established the Southern way of life.

"The Cavaliers and Puritans of that age," wrote a Southern traditionalist in 1860, "were undoubtedly the ancestors, and, to a large extent, the prototypes of this. That the Puritans were unfit for rational freedom, civil or religious, was sufficiently proved by the wild extremity of their principles, going to the subversion of society; by the fierce, fanatic intolerance of

their opinions; and by the short duration of their power when attained. . . .

"The Cavaliers had many human failings; they were indeed of the earth earthy; they fought, they drank, they swore, they loved as better men will never fight, nor drink, nor swear, nor love—but they made no pretense to unusual sanctity, and they were a gallant, high-spirited, chivalrous, and generous race, of the purest Anglo-Saxon blood; and to this day their descendants compose the only free portion of the English people. . . . Knowing that earth could not be made a paradise, they did not, therefore, seek to turn the fair footstool of God into a gloomy hell. Failings they had, but dishonor, sordid meanness, and mammon worship they knew not." [8]

This characterization is typical. One who peruses the files of *DeBow's Review* and other Southern publications of the late ante-bellum period will find many others of similar import. It recurs with elaborations in the writings of post-bellum traditionalists.

"The difference between the Southern civilization and the Northern," says Thomas Nelson Page, "was the result of the difference between their origins and subsequent surroundings." Then he tells the familiar story of how the Northern colonies "were the asylums of religious zealots" who came in search of freedom and became themselves "proscriptors of the most tyrannical type." To the Southern colonies, on the other hand, came "soldiers of fortune and gentlemen in misfortune . . . In the first ship-load of [Virginia]

colonists there were 'four carpenters, twelve laborers, and fifty-four gentlemen.'" The Southern settlers "came with the consent of the crown, the blessings of the Church, and under the auspices and favor of men of high standing in the kingdom." With the best blood of England in their veins and the best of the Old-World traditions in their cultural equipment, they produced a civilization "as distinctive as that of Greece, Carthage, Rome, or Venice"; one that "made men noble, gentle, and brave, and women tender, pure and true . . . It was, I believe, the purest, sweetest life ever lived."

Page acknowledges, as many other traditionalists do, that the Southern planters were not wholly of Cavalier blood. They represented, he says, "the strongest strains of many stocks–Saxon, Celt, and Teuton; Cavalier and *Puritan*." (Italics ours.) He explains, however, that "the gentle blood and high connections which undoubtedly existed in a considerable degree exerted widely a strengthening and refining power, and were potent in their influence to elevate and sustain not only the families which claimed to be their immediate possessors, but through them the entire colonial body, social and politic." Among the "shiploads of artisans and adventurers who came," he says, "each man whether gentle or simple, was compelled to assert himself in the land where personal force was of more worth than family position however exalted; but having proved his personal title to individual respect, he was eager to approve likewise

his claim to honorable lineage, which still was held in high value." And in most cases, it seems, he was able to find a coat of arms somewhere amongst the multiple lines of his ancestry.[4]

So Page, who was typical of the post-bellum group and perhaps the most influential in shaping the tradition in its later forms, does not hold that the "manifold excellences" of the Old South resulted entirely from blue blood, but that they were in large measure the product of a cultural heritage, perfected in a favorable environment by a stock that blended the sturdy and the gentle.

As a matter of fact, the records indicate that there was much more of the sturdy than there was of the gentle. The Southern "aristocracy" was largely self-made and home-made. "What of the F. F. V.'s?" says U. B. Phillips, an outstanding authority on the Old South as it really was. "Did the Carters, Burwells and Randolphs, the Pages, Nelsons and Braxtons, the Fitzhughs, Wythes, Washingtons and Lees derive from noble English houses through gentlefolk always living in elegance and maintaining lofty standards? If so, the records of the seventeenth century are at fault."[5]

Undoubtedly many such families could find some strains of gentle blood among their numerous ancestors, for after half-a-dozen generations one's forebears begin to mount into the hundreds, and after the tenth into the thousands. The English gentry was a fairly numerous group and did furnish a considerable number though a very small per cent of the colonists.

Some went to the North, but the plantation system of the South attracted most of them. Some, says Wertenbaker, even came over as indentured servants. These, it seems, were about as likely to become crude frontiersmen as polished planters, for the records indicate that some of the gentlefolk were quite unable to adapt themselves to the new environment and hence fell into obscurity, while neighbors of yeoman or artisan extraction were founding F. F. V.'s or building mansions on the Charleston water front. One of the proudest of South Carolina's aristocrats, Richard Barnwell Rhett, was born with the tell-tale name of Smith. Searching the family records he found a maternal forefather by the name of Rhett who was entitled to a coat of arms. And so with the sanction of the law Smith became Rhett.

Despite the usual boast of pure Anglo-Saxon stock, some localities in the South have taken peculiar pride in certain Romance strains. Charleston has always been proud of her French Huguenot connections (even though they were largely bourgeois), and New Orleans has boasted her Creoles, whether of French or Spanish origin. And well they may. It was no accident that the first grand opera ever produced in this country was in Charleston in 1735 by a French cast, and that the town maintained thereafter a regular operatic and dramatic season, "while Boston divines were arguing the case of church singing." Nor is it surprising that New Orleans was widely regarded in the early nineteenth century as the chief musical cen-

ter in the United States. At that time European opera troupes, touring America, are said to have stopped at New Orleans, Charleston, Richmond, and New York.[6] It might be mentioned in this connection that Williamsburg, Virginia, with its English "blue blood," had the first playhouse known to have existed in America.

It must be admitted by the realist, however, that the culture of the Old South at its best was much more appreciative than creative. Aside from the fields of political theory and practical statesmanship, in which it was certainly outstanding, it produced even less than the none-too-gifted North. Its chief contribution was a way of life.

There is no doubt that in certain localities a type of life existed which closely approximated the tradition at its best. The exaggeration implied in the tradition, says Francis Pendleton Gaines, "is more quantitative than qualitative . . . The student of actual plantation conditions discovers unmistakable evidence which points to the existence of an order of life in a few limited localities which approximated in real social charm the traditional social charm of the romances." [7] This was particularly true of tidewater Virginia and South Carolina and the lower Mississippi Valley, and to a less extent of tidewater North Carolina and Georgia, eastern Maryland, the more favorable portions of the Piedmont from Virginia to Georgia, parts of Alabama, bluegrass Kentucky, western Tennessee, and small areas in eastern Missouri. In general, it was the

older families—meaning those which had been possessed of wealth for several generations and had been able to enjoy social and cultural opportunities—which came to rank as aristocrats. It was also in the older communities that these were more likely to be found. Even the descendants of gentility found it all but impossible for a time to maintain high cultural standards in a newly settled region. "Children of the few cultured parents," says Phillips, "must needs talk of hounds and horses, as their crude companions were doing, rather than of Shakespeare and Milton, . . . while Caesar and Cicero were more often the names of Negroes in the yard than of authors on the shelves. Yet culture, if residual, did not approach extinction before prosperity and ambition for fine life brought renaissance. . . . Some households were staunch enough to hold their standards in the thick of the wilderness and to radiate refinement instead of yielding to rough mediocrity." Troup County and its neighbors in western Georgia are said to have been settled in controlling degree from the first by gentle folk and never to have known a rough régime. A similar beginning, or else a quick renaissance, is attributed to the Huntsville neighborhood in Alabama and the Natchez and Petit Gulf districts on the Mississippi.[8] In general, then, while the plantation areas included crude regions and uncouth *nouveaux riches*, they tended to develop in time the social standards and culture patterns associated with gentility.

Of course the number of families which by the

eighteen-fifties had actually come to approximate the traditional standards of the gentry was a small proportion of the South's population. In 1860 there were 46,274 owners of twenty or more slaves. Rating these as planters and allowing an average of five members to the family, about a quarter of a million Southerners belonged to planter families. It would be little better than guesswork to estimate the proportion of these who measurably conformed to the aristocratic way of life. The important point is that this was the ideal which they generally set for themselves and toward which to a greater or less extent they tended in time to conform.

Planter life traditionally centered in a stately mansion, usually of the "Southern colonial" type, with broad verandas and large, white columns. Spacious, well kept gardens abounded with flowers and shrubbery, generally including ancient boxwood and a riot of many-hued azaleas and roses. Avenues of liveoaks and magnolias—in the lower tidewater regions hung with Spanish moss—led down to the river's edge. The house was elaborately but tastefully furnished with mahogany and rosewood imported from England; was beautifully decorated with family portraits in oil, tapestries, draperies, and rugs of the finest quality; and was equipped with silver plate and china bearing the family coat of arms. The library walls were lined with fine old books, mainly classics, suggestive of the humanist culture of the household. Broad and boun-

teous fields, well stocked barns, stables of pure-bred horses, and "the quarters" where happy pickaninnies tumbled at play may all be taken for granted.

Here again the exaggeration is mainly quantitative. Some hundreds of homes of this general type undoubtedly existed, and numbers of them still exist, though in many cases in a state of dilapidation that sadly attests the fallen estate of their owners. But the majority of the planters lived in houses that could make little or no pretense to architectural beauty. Even Thomas Nelson Page admits that most of such homes were rather plain externally, though he maintains that at least in Virginia they were beautifully decorated within and sumptuously furnished. As a matter of fact, the "Southern colonial" type—more properly known as the Greek, or classical, revival—was not colonial at all; it did not appear until after the Revolution and was largely the inspiration of Thomas Jefferson. It did not become at all common until well into the nineteenth century. Prior to the eighteen-thirties the dormered English cottage type of a story-and-a-half prevailed in Virginia, while farther south the square, two-storied house with broad verandas on both floors was more common. Each type usually had a wide hallway from front to rear, both for convenience and for comfort in hot weather. Numbers of homes that could hardly rank as mansions did have the hallmarks of gentility. In the regions mentioned above some relics of better days have even

yet escaped the sheriffs' sales and the depredations of antique collectors.

Of all the characteristics of life among the planter class of the Old South the one most emphasized in the tradition was its joy of living. The plantation life of romance was "aflame with social brilliance." Planter homes were "temples to the religion of hospitality." Here too for a considerable proportion of such families the tradition but little exaggerates. Francis Taylor, a cousin of James Madison, found life in Piedmont Virginia so full of pleasure that there was little time for "great affairs." Another young man found himself constantly torn between ambition and pleasure; books were plentiful but there was little time to read them. A young physician with studious inclinations found, upon marrying the daughter of a planter, that his life was so filled with social activities that he had virtually to abandon further study. Edmund Ruffin said that social affairs so engaged the attention of planters that they were unable to attend properly to their business. He predicted that extravagance and inattention to the practical affairs of the plantation would prove the undoing of the class, as indeed it did for many.[9] Perhaps the most notable instance was Thomas Jefferson. A rich planter when he retired from the Presidency, he entertained so lavishly in the years that followed that he eventually became a bankrupt and died in relative poverty. The Lee estate had suffered similarly before Robert Edward

came along. Most of such families, however, seem to have held their own in spite of such extravagance. It should be remembered in this connection that there were a thousand families in the South in 1850 with an annual income of more than $50,000 and several thousand with not very much less.

Harriet Martineau, an English lady who visited America in the 1830's found that "in the South . . . there is much vanity of retinue, much extravagance, from fear of imputation of poverty which would follow upon retrenchment; and great recklessness of life, from fear of the imputation of cowardice which might follow upon the forgiveness of injuries." In the North, on the other hand, there was no retinue, but there was often ostentation of wealth in the commercial cities.[10] Olmsted, biased as he was, admitted that among the rice planters there was "less vulgar display and more intrinsic elegance than in any distinct class among us" (at the North).[11] Northern resorts catered especially to Southern planter families. Such contacts were among the more important bonds of union between the sections, socially as well as economically. Many a Northern man, such as Stephen A. Douglas, counted himself fortunate to obtain the hand of a Southern gentlewoman. To be entertained in a Southern home was a high ambition of Northern youth.

One of the main reasons for the charm of the Old Southern life at its best was that the planter had leisure and knew how to use it to make life an "exhilarating

experience." Not that he was free from responsibilities; he simply did not allow the business of making a living to supersede the art of making a life.

Another characteristic attributed to the gentry was a high degree of culture. And there is every evidence that among the few there was at least a cultural appreciation of the humanistic type that probably surpassed to a considerable degree that of most college graduates of today. In general their education was much less diversified, less technical, but often more thorough in its particular fields, and well adapted to their own interests and way of life. Tutors were provided for children in the home. Sometimes a private academy bridged the gap from the primary subjects to college. Often the tutor was capable of supplying the intermediate training himself. In any case, the girls normally went to academies or "finishing schools," or perhaps to colleges, which emphasized the fine arts and social graces; the boys went to a college or university in their own state or to a Northern or English university. But schooling, however important, was not as naïvely regarded as the one sure means to culture as it came to be in the New South. Travel and conversation were held by many to have fully as great cultural value as schools and books. And travel was indulged in freely by the better-to-do planter families. Conversation was not only a social grace but something of a fine art. Libraries were not wholly neglected despite the social whirl. There are many evidences in the literature, correspondence, and

public documents of the Old South indicative of a rich classical culture.

To the term "Southern gentleman" there may or may not have been prefixed the adjective "Christian." In Jefferson's time and later, not a few such men were either deists or very unorthodox "believers." A large proportion of them, especially in Virginia and South Carolina, were Episcopalians ; in Louisiana, Catholics ; and in either case they were proud of the fact that their church was non-Puritanical. It was not until after the Civil War, when Lee became the prototype of the *Christian* Southern gentleman, that particular emphasis was generally placed upon the religious qualities of such men. Perhaps this was partly due to the character of Lee himself and partly to the growing influence of the evangelical denominations in the post-bellum South. Not that such denominations were lacking in strength in the Old South, but they attracted a smaller proportion of influential families then than later.

However lightly or heavily he may have worn the Christian mantle, the Southern gentleman was always chivalrous. The implications of the word are several. First, from its etymological origin it denotes horsemanship. To ride and drive well, to be a good judge of horseflesh, to love a good horse with a tenderness of the sort displayed toward a woman or a child was a characteristic which every Southerner of the better class acquired so early as to seem inherited. The romances of the Old South dwell upon the point. The

excellence of the Confederate cavalry under the leadership of Stuart, Ashby, Wheeler, Morgan, Forrest, and others testifies to it. The intimacy with which history has associated General Lee and "Traveler" throws over it a mantle of sentiment which a native of the automobile age finds it difficult to comprehend.

In the second place, chivalry denoted dexterity at arms. The Southern youth early learned the art of handling guns and pistols. Fencing with swords and rapiers was practised to a limited extent in the earlier period but tended to fall into disuse before the Civil War. Hunting was a favorite pastime. Next to his horses the Southerner loved his dogs. Pedigreed pointers and setters were to be found wherever plantations existed and many an argument waxed warm as to the relative merits of the two breeds. Hounds of several varieties abounded. So common were they, in fact, that the possession of them, excepting the keen-scented bloodhound and the aristocratic greyhound, tended to mark the owner as somewhat vulgar. Even the "poor whites" had their hound dogs for chasing foxes and rabbits and treeing 'possums and coons. One bond of unity between rich and poor, white and black, was the common thrill which came when the baying of a good 'possum dog indicated that he had "hit the trail," and when the quick, staccato yapping signaled that the prey had been treed.

Thirdly, chivalry implied valor. And valor was a cardinal point in the Southern mores. Whether it manifested itself with dignity or found expression in

the vaunting of the swashbuckler was a prime test of gentility. Whatever his rating in the social scale the Southerner was quick to resent an insult or injury to himself, his family, or his kin. Murderous feuds were not as a rule perpetuated among the best families in the older communities, but the *code duello* persisted among them long after it had virtually passed away in other parts of the country. However, the code was resorted to only when honor was impugned by an equal; the horsewhip was the proper weapon to use upon inferiors. In the North the assault of Preston Brooks upon Charles Sumner was regarded as cowardly; in the South, where Sumner was considered the embodiment of all that was low, mean, and vulgar, there was some inclination to blame Brooks for dignifying the affray with a cane when a horsewhip would have been regarded as more befitting.

Southern valor was thought to have received its supreme test in war. Chief credit for the final victory over England in the Revolution was attributed to the incomparable Washington and his Southern veterans. Such glory as came to the American armies in the War of 1812 was under the leadership of Harrison, the Virginian, and Jackson, the Carolinian and Tennessean. Texan independence had been gained by Sam Houston, the Tennessean, and his little army of Southerners. The victory over Mexico in the forties had been won by Taylor, the Louisianan, and Scott, the Virginian, with armies composed largely of Southerners. As the Civil War approached, it was widely

believed in the South that the Yankees would not fight, and if they did their armies of shop-keepers and factory hands could easily be routed by a few handfuls of Southerners. For what the latter may have lacked in numbers and resources was thought to be more than offset by superior valor. To a degree this illusion was dispelled by the war, but for years afterward it was a common belief that the Confederates had always displayed superior valor on every battlefield, had won all their victories against fearful odds, and had been overwhelmed at last only because of irreplaceable decimation in their ranks in the face of the ever-increasing hordes of their opponents.

In the fourth place, chivalry carried with it a deep sense of *noblesse oblige.* And this was not only an essential part of the tradition but a prime element in the Southern mores. If the master class was imbued with a sense of superiority, it was also impelled by a consciousness of responsibility and obligation toward the less fortunate members of the community—to a much greater degree, one would judge, than modern masters of capital. Slaves were not turned out in slack seasons to face starvation or grudging charity. Household servants especially were treated almost as members of the family—so long, of course, as they maintained a fitting sense of their inferior status, which they almost invariably learned to do in early life. As to the field hands, numerous letters of planters to their overseers attest the fact that the masters were solicitous as to the physical and psychical well being of

their slaves. Of course there was an economic motive involved. A good slave was worth about a thousand—perhaps two thousand—dollars, and it would have been foolish to neglect or maltreat him to the impairment of his health. But the motive was not entirely economic. There was a sense of obligation on the part of the master and in general a human sympathy for his own that could not tolerate neglect of one in distress or in the evening of a serviceable life.

In relation to his poorer white neighbors the planter's position resembled more nearly that of the contemporary English squire than that of the medieval baron. He was looked up to as a superior person, a natural leader, a just arbiter, and a sympathetic friend-in-need. Even in the late nineteenth century it was not uncommon, in Southern communities, for "plain people" to tip their hats to the "squire," the "colonel," the "cap'n" or the "jedge." Almost invariably the aristocrat was known by some such title, and he usually held some office. This bore out the Jeffersonian theory of democracy that the free-holders of all classes would generally unite in electing the more intelligent of their fellow citizens to dominant positions. Presuming that greater intelligence was attested by superior achievement, the electorate more often than otherwise chose the big planter for office. And when the basis of suffrage was enlarged in the eighteen-twenties and thirties the results in most cases were not changed. The "squire" was still the "squire," whether as Senator, Congressman, judge, or justice of the

peace. The planter was often a lawyer as well, or at least was conversant with the common law and the statutes. But what was perhaps more important, he was possessed of a common feeling for justice and equity. As judge or simply as "squire," he was more concerned that a dispute be settled amicably and fairly than that a legal technicality be invoked to win a case at the expense of justice. Hence in formal court and, more frequently, in informal conferences the parties to an impending action were persuaded to accept a decision which endeavored to give satisfaction to both disputants. In any event, it rarely happened that any one suspected the "jedge" of seeking his own personal advantage. Irwin S. Cobb's character, "Judge Priest," though somewhat sentimentalized, is a faithful representation of the traditional Southern jurist and arbiter of neighborhood disputes. Finally, the home of a prosperous Southern planter was a sort of relief station for less fortunate neighbors in want or distress. These were not likely to be turned away, however "sorry" and "good-for-nothing" they may have been reputed to be.

> And the great man helped the poor
> And the poor man loved the great

was more true of ante-bellum Southerners than of ancient Romans.

But the crowning glory of Southern chivalry was its politeness, courtesy, and gallantry. In the better

homes of the Old South children grew up in an atmosphere of politeness which they imbibed so naturally that there was never an appearance of affectation. By precept if not always by example, those in humbler homes had such ideals held up to them, and even the "poor whites" and dusky household servants were usually polite, at least in the presence of their "betters." And it was not merely a matter of manners; there was much of genuine kindliness, of natural graciousness in the Old Southern mores. And those who rated, or aspired to rate, as "gentlemen" must be gallant. In this as in other aspects of their chivalry they were inspired by the Cavalier tradition and by the idyllic romances of medieval knighthood. The Southern gentleman has been pictured in fiction as lying upon his lawn reading the novels of Sir Walter Scott and associating their chivalric ideals with his own.

Politeness, courtesy and especially gallantry were more manifest in a gentleman's attitude toward the ladies. In this respect he may have appeared over-ceremonious and even obsequious to those unfamiliar with the mores of his class and section. But if he were "to the manner born" he was almost intuitively deferential, and even reverential, toward ladies, whatever their age or their relations to him. He must never dispute a lady's word. If it seemed necessary to correct her as to facts or to state a contrary opinion, he must do so with the utmost tact. If possible, he obscured the element of contradiction; if not, he apologized so gra-

ciously that the balm more than cured any possible wound. On the other hand, when public questions or other matters regarded as masculine were at issue, a lady would scarcely oppose her opinions, if any, to those of a gentleman. But when a lady spoke her fiat on a matter of social relations, there was no appeal.

It is not easy for young men and women of today to understand the relations between the sexes in the ante-bellum South. Anything like a modern petting party would then have been quite unthinkable among respectable people. The Southern gentleman may have "loved as better men will never love," but in his premarital relations with his lady he had to leave a great deal more to imagination than does the modern young man. The gallant of the questionable type was strictly taboo. Lapses of the moral code between men and women of the better class were extremely rare. If such ever occurred, and the "wronged" one was a married woman, her husband was generally expected to demand "satisfaction" of the culprit, and whatever the consequences he could plead the "unwritten law" with the virtual certainty of acquittal and approval from his peers. If she were single, he might agree to marry her or take the consequences at the hands of her relatives. The "fallen" woman was forever doomed to social ostracism.

This half chivalric, half Puritan moral code had tremendous weight in molding the character of Southern young women. The preponderantly agricultural economy of the Old South offered practically

no economic opportunities for the unmarried woman of any but the lowest class. As there were relatively few Catholics the life of a nun was rarely considered, and concubinage was practically non-existent. And so for a lady to remain single meant not only frustration of her normal desires but a life of dependence upon some of her relatives, in which case her welcome often depended upon her ability to make herself useful as a sort of upper-class servant. In this case, even the children may have sensed the status of "Aunt Mary" or "Cousin Annie" and vented upon her with impunity their resentment against grown-ups. The lot of such "old maids" strengthened the Southern girl's natural desire to obtain a husband—one of the better class if possible but willing to take a step downward to escape the risk of permanent celibacy.

To win a husband she must have *charm*. If possible she must be beautiful; at least she must make herself daintily attractive. Tradition usually paints her as the former and always as the latter. Whether the percentage of pulchritude was actually higher among the young women of the planter class in the South than among those in the North whose social positions enabled them to make the most of their native endowments can not be positively determined. At least it was widely claimed by Southerners and not infrequently admitted by Northerners. Perhaps the somewhat more rigid social standards of the planter class tended to make it biologically more select and the sheltered life of its well served children and youth

to free them from marring cares. Whatever her natural attractiveness the Southern young lady was likely to be thoroughly feminine. True, the vigorous, vivacious, even tomboyish type of girl was not absent; but she was not the ideal. The gentlewoman should be delicate, tender, even frail. A tiny foot, a spider-like waist, a lily-white hand, and an alabaster brow. A bewitching smile but never a boisterous laugh. Language must be chaste—free from slang, vulgarity, and any suggestion of profanity or the risqué. And no gentleman used profanity in the presence of ladies or suffered others to do so. A lady should not entirely disrobe in the presence of her own sex or even in the privacy of her bath.

In any case, a lady must have "accomplishments." If she had the slightest aptitude she must learn to sing and play the pianoforte and perhaps some other instrument. Unless she lived in a strait-laced Baptist-Methodist community she must be able to dance. Perhaps she was also able to draw and paint. Such accomplishments if not obtained in the home or from private teachers must be acquired at a "young ladies' seminary" or a "female college," of which a large number were established in the South. There she would learn *belles-lettres* and the fine arts, rhetoric, Latin, and perhaps some modern languages, but probably not Greek or mathematics, for these were thought too difficult for her and hence not feminine. Whatever her accomplishments she must always have the tact never to make a gentleman feel inferior.

Once possessed, what sort of wife did the young gentleman have? A hot-house plant? An ornament to be ever so carefully sheltered, protected, and nurtured, but of no use except to gratify the senses? Or, to change the figure, a plaything to be toyed with for a season and then discarded for another wife or mistress as so often happens today in the same relative position in society? Not likely. And why not? Was it because the Church in its strict moral teaching with regard to the sacredness of marriage vows still had a sufficiently strong hold to obtain respect for its sanction? Was it because divorce or neglect of one's wife was so strongly and so generally frowned upon by the community? Or was it because the code of the Southern gentleman demanded a high degree of marital constancy? No doubt all these influences had their weight, but probably the chief factor making for conjugal faithfulness and happiness was the woman herself. Her character as well as her cultural equipment came largely from her upbringing. If she had been taught how to win a husband she had also been taught how to hold him. The latter phase of her training emphasized fidelity, absolute and unquestioned. It also emphasized Xenophon's advice to a wife (though usually unaware of its origin), "please your husband and take care of his interests." To fulfill this requirement she must be highly versatile. She must take care of all his physical desires and comforts and be ever ready to entertain with expected lavishness his casual or specially invited guests. She must be able to super-

vise the household, including the servants, with efficiency and without fuss or bluster. She must bear as many children as he wished—or as God sent—and properly rear all that survived. She must be able to make her presence simultaneously felt in kitchen, slave-quarters, nursery, and parlor. A hostess whose presence to the guests seemed only in the parlor but whose directing genius was felt in all parts of the household. Further efforts to describe her multiform virtues and responsibilities are rendered unnecessary by Stephen Vincent Benét in his picture of the Mistress of Wingate Hall:

She was at work by candlelight,
She was at work in the dead of night,
Smoothing out troubles and healing schisms
And doctoring phthisics and rheumatisms,
Guiding the cooking and watching the baking,
And sewing, and soap-and-candle-making,
The brewing, the darning, the lady-daughters,
The births, and deaths in the negro-quarters,
Seeing that Suke had some new, strong shoes
And Joe got a week in the calaboose,
While Dicey's Jacob escaped a whipping
And the jellybag dripped with its proper dripping,
And the shirts and estrangements were neatly mended,
And all the tasks that never ended.

Her manner was gracious but hardly fervent
And she seldom raised her voice to a servant.
She was often mistaken, not often blind,
And she knew the whole duty of womankind,

To take the burden and have the power
And seem like the well-protected flower,
To manage a dozen industries
With casual gesture in scraps of ease,
To hate the sin and love the sinner
And to see that the gentlemen got their dinner
Ready and plenty and piping-hot
Whether you wanted to eat or not.
And always, always, to have the charm
That makes the gentlemen take your arm
But never the bright unseemly spell
That makes strange gentlemen love too well,
Once you were married and settled down
With a suitable gentleman of your own.

And when that happened, and you had bred
The requisite children, living and dead,
To pity the fool and comfort the weak
And always let the gentlemen speak,
To succor your love from deep-struck roots
When gentlemen went to bed in their boots,
And manage a gentleman's whole plantation
In a manner befitting your female station.

This was the creed that her mother taught her
And the creed that she taught her daughter.
She knew her Bible—and how to flirt
With a swansdown fan and a brocade skirt.
For she trusted in God but she liked formalities
And the world and Heaven were both realities.
—In Heaven, of course, we should all be equal,
But, until we came to that golden sequel,

Gentility must keep to gentility
Where God and breeding had made things stable,
While the rest of the cosmos deserved civility
But dined in its boots at the second-table.[12]

The tradition is most misleading in the impression which it tends to produce of a tripartite society, made up of planters, "poor whites," and slaves. It generally ignores or recognizes but vaguely the existence of a middle-class, or fairly well-to-do, farmer element; and it fails to differentiate the large class of farmers who were poor and white, but not "poor white" in the limited sense of this term. Yet these two groups together composed the great majority of the white population of the ante-bellum South. More than three times as many families held from five to nineteen slaves as held twenty or more, nearly half the slave-holders held fewer than five, and three-fourths of the white population held none at all—see table on page 42. Of the non-slaveholders a decided minority conformed to the usual conception of "poor whites." Not that the two in-between groups were distinct from each other; they shaded imperceptibly together. And, socially speaking, the lines that distinguished them at the top from the gentry and at the bottom from the "poor whites" were vague and shifting. Certainly they did not conform at all closely to economic status. The standard by which we rate as planters those who owned twenty or more slaves[13] was not

SLAVEHOLDERS GROUPED ACCORDING TO NUMBERS HELD IN 1860

NUMBER OF SLAVES HELD	NUMBER OF HOLDERS	PER CENT OF ALL HOLDERS	NO. PERSONS IN HOLDING FAMILIES	PER CENT OF WHITE POP. IN FAMILIES
100 and over	2,292	.6	11,460	.2
20 and over	46,274	12.1	231,370	2.9
10-19	61,682	15.8	308,410	3.9
5-9	89,423	23.2	447,115	5.6
1-4	186,256	48.5	931,280	11.8
1-19	337,361	87.8	1,686,805	21.3
Total	383,637	100	1,938,185	24.2

in general a social criterion; though it had some social significance, at least indirectly, in that it approximately delimited those who employed one or more overseers and hence were afforded more leisure and better opportunity to cultivate the art of living. But just as some rich planters, especially the newly rich, did not qualify as gentlemen; so a fair proportion of middle-class farmers (according to the economic test) were rated in their communities as upper class. Some of these, as indicated above, were descended immediately or remotely from gentlemen planters and had maintained the marks of gentility despite a decline of fortunes; others were of well established yeoman families which had long cultivated the genteel qualities and perhaps married into the class above. Thus even in the planter-dominated communities social

gradations had nothing of the rigidity of caste. Outside the fringes of the black belt they were little regarded locally, and in the mountains practically not at all. But even in communities from which gentility itself was absent its traditions were not wholly unknown nor its influence unfelt, especially among the rising yeomanry.

A considerable proportion of the middle-class farmers were descendants of Scotch-Irish, Highland Scotch (especially in North Carolina), and German settlers of colonial times; while a few were of Irish, French, or Swiss extraction. Some of these had settled in the coastal plain, but most of the Scotch-Irish and Germans had drifted down the Piedmont from Pennsylvania. Driven from their Old-World homes by economic and religious restrictions, they and their descendants were liberty-loving, hardy, industrious, more or less clannish, deeply religious and sectarian. The Scotch were generally Presbyterian; the Germans mostly Lutheran, though in some cases of other Protestant sects, notably the Moravians who settled around Salem, North Carolina. By the late antebellum period some descendants of these groups who lived near the navigable rivers or the newly built railroads had risen to the planter class. They were joined in the meantime by other planters from the English settled coastland. Descendants of both had moved on westward and southwestward with the shifting frontier. Planters had perhaps acquired, or were in the process of acquiring, the standards and reputation of

gentility. Middle-class and even poorer farmers probably aspired to such rank.

The mass of ordinary farmers were generally prosaic and humdrum. Their homes and surroundings were often unkempt. Unsightly barns, miry horse lots, and unpainted fences were as conspicuous as the homely residences themselves. Tourists noted the contrast between the neat, well kept farmhouses of New England and the slovenly premises of many Southern farmers.[14] This was due in part no doubt to the less bracing climate of the South, but often also to the natural desire of those with inadequate servant help to enjoy something of the leisure which their better-to-do neighbors enjoyed. In compensation for such crudeness, however, they were generally sturdy, self-reliant, more or less educated, kindly, and exceedingly hospitable. Whether stranger or friend, one was not likely to be turned away if he sought lodging at such a home. Neighbors could be sure of assistance generously rendered in time of need.

The community centers were the rural or village store, the county seat, and the church. The assemblage at the store was not very different from similar gatherings in other parts of the country. Perhaps the interest in "court week" was somewhat heightened because of the greater isolation of rural homes in the South. At any rate the farmer would usually find an excuse for "goin' to co't." If the political oratory and possibly a barbecue were to intersperse the legal proceedings, the attraction was multiplied. But consciously or not,

he was primarily in quest of social intercourse. The monthly service at the rural church found saints and sinners alike enjoying the long confabs before and after the service and either scouring the assemblage for dinner guests or ready themselves for an invitation, preferably from the neighbor whose home would be most popular at mealtime. And the richness, variety, and plenitude of the old-fashioned Southern meal is no myth. Fried chicken, chicken pie, pork sausage, boiled and fried ham, perhaps mutton or beef, several kinds of gravy, corn bread, biscuit, rice, yellow yams, cabbage, turnips and greens, apple pies, custard pies, ginger cakes, pound cakes, layer cakes, and soft or hard drinks were all likely to be served at the same meal. And the guests were expected to do justice to all. Even at breakfast there were usually several kinds of meat with gravy, hominy grits, corn bread, biscuit, batter cakes, johnnycakes, or waffles, home-made syrup or molasses, and perhaps fresh or home-canned fruit, with coffee, tea, or milk. The most elaborate feasts were those served "on the ground"—usually on long, improvised tables—at special church gatherings, such as the quarterly general meetings and annual associations of the Baptists and the similar conferences of the Methodists. These were attended by almost the entire white population for many miles around. Those in easy reach of the church, especially the members of it, brought huge baskets of food which had taken some days to prepare. Others were guests. Admittedly or not, the feast and the so-

ciability that went with it were more enjoyed in prospect and participation, if not always in immediate retrospect, than the services themselves. Such hospitality and conviviality persisted well into the more recent period and still have not entirely disappeared; but aside from the more isolated communities they have waned or vanished with the spread of automobiles and highways, the growth of non-subsistence farming, and the rise of commercialized entertainment in the New South. With their passing, something that was basic in the molding of Southern character—individual and social—was lost. Furthermore, it might well be maintained that the old-fashioned log-rollings, house raisings, corn shuckings, quilting parties, and country dances possessed more wholesome social values than are offered by the modern "movies," popular radio programs, jazz dancing, joy riding, and petting parties.

Such comparisons should not assume, however, that "the good old days" were altogether "good," or that we have "fallen upon evil times." Certainly the life of the simple agricultural community was not as idyllic as it is sometimes pictured. Those old social gatherings were not infrequently marked by boisterous drunkenness, which sometimes led to murderous fights. Such in turn may have left a long train of personal or family bitterness partaking of the nature of a feud. Gambling, with all its possibilities of controversy, especially when accompanied by hard drinking, was a common vice among high and low in the Old South. The country dance, or "break-down" usually

bore slight resemblance to the stately ball of aristocratic circles. It must be admitted, however, that there was a wholesome dignity and restraint about the prevailing square dance and Virginia reel, even when performed in a humble farmhouse by ordinary rustics. Such people were innocent of the modern sophistication of the Eddie Cantors and Mae Wests, and yet at the lower social levels they were not without a share of the coarseness and "tackiness" of the hill-billies.

And who were the "poor whites"? This term, as we have indicated—when quoted or capitalized to designate a specific class—represents a relatively small proportion of the Southern population, confined in the main to the infertile lands of the coastal plain. The pine barrens and sand hills that flanked or interspersed the plantation areas became eddies that caught up the biologically defective and environmentally diseased—the human driftwood of the South. Some writers have sought to trace their origin to the indentured servants of colonial times, but such scholars as Wertenbaker have shown that these were as likely to become sturdy frontiersmen, or perhaps big planters, as "poor whites." Whatever their origin, they were the victims of poverty and poor soil but more especially, it seems, of malaria and hookworm. The latter disease, which was not understood until the early years of the present century, is said to have been brought to this country by Negroes from Africa. The germ enters the body through the foot, first producing a local irrita-

tion known as "ground-itch" ; then it passes through the blood to the inner walls of the intestines, where it becomes a parasitic worm. The person so affected becomes anemic, lazy, and ambitionless—a condition greatly accentuated if the diet is inadequate ; in which case a craving for clay or dirt may ensue. And it is no myth that "poor whites" thus afflicted actually ate dirt. So utterly "sorry and no account" were such people, some of whom lived as menials in planter communities, that the Negroes derived great psychic compensation from the oft-quoted saying :

> You can't make a livin'
> On sandy lan' ;
> I'd ruther be a nigger
> Than a po' white man.

The disease was largely confined to the lowlands, and, along with malaria of similar habitat, seems mainly to account for the worst characteristics of the class which it mostly affected. It is interesting to note in this connection that numbers of cases have come under the personal observation of the authors, in which children cured of the disease have shown changes in mentality and personality little short of miraculous. Hence, though inherited deficiencies may have played their part, local diseases rather than the blight of contact with slavery seem largely to account for the character of the "po' white trash."

It so happened that most of the Northern and Eu-

ropean visitors who wrote their observations of the South in the ante-bellum period passed through the very areas in which were alternately found the aristocratic planters and "poor whites." This together with the fact that most of them came with a pre-formed prejudice against slavery, accounts in large measure for the legend of a tripartite society. Furthermore, the novelist was afforded dramatic effect in contrasting the best with the worst.

This is not to say that slavery had no injurious effects upon the poverty and degradation of the "poor whites" or upon the shortcomings of other classes. In so far as the slaveless whites produced staples for market—and this was of relatively small account—they were injured somewhat by the competition with slave labor. Hinton R. Helper had a real point in this regard, despite his juggling with figures to make it appear stronger than it was. Then too, the presence of the Negro as the menial of the better-class whites tended in some ways to degrade the dignity of labor, though to a much less extent than theoretical writers have supposed. A gentleman might exult in his strength in a log-rolling but shrink from scattering manure. A lady might readily lend a hand in the kitchen but not wish to wash or iron clothes in public view. Such menial tasks were thought of in connection with "niggers" and "poor whites."

It is sometimes said of the "poor whites" that they were either cowardly or "too lazy to fight." This was by no means always true. Lazy they were, and long

suffering; but their wrath once thoroughly roused, they would "fight a circular saw."

In addition to the above classes there were numbers of whites whose social rank was too indefinite to admit of specific classification. For instance, there were the stewards, who had general supervision over the various plantations of the large planters; the overseers, each in charge of a particular plantation, directing the labor, controlling the conduct, and looking after the welfare of the slaves; and the foremen or "drivers," of special gangs. Often the position of "driver" was intrusted to one of the slaves who had a dependable and commanding personality, or else it was held by a low class white man. With some exceptions, mainly among the stewards, those holding such managerial positions were not highly regarded. Drawn mostly from the small farmer class, they seem to have cut themselves loose from their former connections without being taken into the social group of their employer. Apparently this gave them a sense of isolation which sometimes bordered on morbidity and sadism. Novelists of Southern life in the old days have generally assigned to the overseer the rôle of villain. In reality not all of them were as bad as they have been pictured. Among the prime qualifications of an overseer were ability to manage the slaves with a minimum of friction and harshness and to provide properly for their well-being. However, their functions certainly were not of a kind to bring out the best in their own personalities

but rather to develop the vices of the petty tyrant. "Young or old, wise or foolish, ambitious or plodding, dour or debonair, harsh or indulgent," says Phillips, "they were alike only in their weather-beaten complexions and their habituation to the control of slaves as a daily routine." [14]

The slave-traders occupied an even less enviable position than the overseers. Tradition has it that many, if not most, of them were Yankees come South to enrich themselves in the nefarious trade—for interestingly enough gentlemen planters did regard professional trading in slaves as a nefarious business, even though they may have found it convenient at times to abet it with their patronage. The situation was not unlike the more recent attitude toward bootleggers.

Professional men varied widely in their social rating, even within a given profession. Country preachers and circuit riders were generally respected and more or less revered, but their rating in the social scale was nondescript. The upper clergy of the Episcopal Church, and of the Catholic Church in some regions, rated high, as did the more refined and cultured ministers wherever found. In the case of lawyers, doctors, editors, and civil officers, it depended upon their heritage, upbringing, and character. With few exceptions, such as Quaker ministers and a few others, professional men staunchly defended the status quo, slavery and all, as will appear in the next chapter.

Business men and townspeople in general were tied up with the system. In fact there was very little of a

distinct bourgeoisie; for many of the leading merchants, brokers, importers, and bankers were also planter-aristocrats, and those who were not were dependent mainly upon a planter clientele. Hence the merchant prince as such was scarcely existent. Such larger towns as there were in the Old South were dominated socially by planters with town houses, their families spending a season each year "in the city."

And what was the "city"? Measured in terms of bigness it was not much. Aside from Louisville, St. Louis, and Baltimore (all on the periphery of the South), New Orleans alone had more than fifty thousand population in 1860. Only five others had over twenty thousand: Charleston, 40,522; Richmond, 37,910; Mobile, 29,258; Memphis, 22,633; and Savannah, 22,292. Such towns had their share of poverty and vice, but they also had a generous allotment of culture, refinement, and leisurely enjoyment of life. To outsiders they appeared slow and lazy. Social groups are known to have taken years—instead of a single afternoon—studying the literature and art of a country. People took time to be civil even in business relations.

The leisurely tempo of life in the South has often been ascribed to climate. To this partial explanation must be added the fact that the section was preponderantly agricultural and that the processes of agriculture could not be speeded up as could those of industry and trade under the impulse of modern in-

ventions. In the industrial and commercial areas of the North the acceleration of economic processes reflected itself in the general tempo of life. Even in the agricultural areas of that section machinery was beginning to be introduced in the late ante-bellum period, with somewhat similar effects. But it so happened that the staple crops of the South could not so easily be subjected to machine processes. Then too, where grain was grown on a large scale the harvest season was necessarily a time of hurry, whereas the cotton picking season dragged on from August to December. There was little in the life of the Southerners that demanded haste.

At the bottom of the social scale were the Negroes —the blacks and all their lighter kin, all who had a trace of African blood, whether bond or free. Here the line of demarcation was quite sharp. The sorriest of the "poor whites," even the most debauched ne'er-do-wells, assuaged whatever pride they had with the boast that they were "better than any nigger." And the assertion was never challenged by the better-class whites. It was unthinkable for the richest planter to put his poorest white neighbor in the kitchen to eat with the "niggers." If such were not served at the main table, separate provisions were made. Liveried servants, with their superior manners and culture, and even free Negroes of outstanding merit who remained in the South must observe all the laws, written and unwritten, that marked their inferior status. They

may have felt otherwise, they may have vaunted a bit in the presence of "trash," but in general they knew to "keep their place."

The strict guarding of this social line seemed necessary to the whites. It was largely on a basis of racial inferiority that slaves were held to a subservient attitude, hence the best of them and of the free Negroes must be kept ever mindful of that status. Then too, the psychic compensation thus afforded the great mass of slaveless whites was needed to maintain their support of the institution. And these, since their position in the social structure was most at stake, were generally most zealous in upholding the barrier.

The subsequent survival of this attitude helps to explain the deep-seated prejudice of the white South against the Negro. But it is by no means the whole story. The effects of the Abolitionist crusade, the Civil War, and more especially reconstruction will appear in later chapters.

The lot of the slaves under the system differed as widely as that of the children of all kinds of parents. In fact, it was often said, "Mean to his family, mean to his slaves," and *vice versa.* On the smaller farms, the master, his sons, and his slaves worked together, played together, went fishing together, and were often on the friendliest terms. But if the master was brutal, both sons and slaves would suffer.

On the large plantations there was a high degree of division of labor, hence of specialized tasks. Phillips has given an interesting classification of the slaves on

a James River plantation in 1854. Of the domestic staff there were: one butler, two waitresses, four housemaids, one nurse, one laundress, one seamstress, one dairy maid, and one gardener. Of the field staff there were: eight plowmen, twenty-two hoe hands, two wagoners, four ox drivers, and two cooks. Of the stable and pasture staff: one carriage driver, one hostler, one stable boy, one shepherd, one cowherd, and one hogherd. In the outdoor crafts were two carpenters and five stone masons. In the indoor crafts: one miller, two blacksmiths, two shoemakers, five women spinners, and one woman weaver. Besides these, there were forty-five children, one invalid, one nurse for the sick, and several people too old to work. The classified workers comprised none younger than sixteen except the stable boy (eleven) and one waiter (twelve). With the exception of one stone mason, no slave over sixty was given any appraisable value.

Among the domestics were the "mammies" and "daddies," "uncles" and "aunties," Zekes and Lizas whom tradition has glorified and many Southern families have actually held in deathless esteem. As Professor Sydnor says,[15]

> On the whole, the life of the house servant was far more pleasant than that of the field hand. His food was likely to be the same as was served to the white family. Clothing was frequently identical, subject to the qualification that the servant enjoyed it second-hand. A larger per cent of the house servants could read and write.

Generally they copied the manners of the owner, and the dignity of the house was usually safe in their hands.

The good old "black mammy" of tradition was a real character—the most lovable that slavery produced. Not that every Negress who ever nursed a white child possessed all her virtues; many gave their charges more crudities and superstitions than virtues; but patience, sympathy, and kindly devotion were all but universal among them. And "Uncle Remus" was mythical only in that he was a composite of his type and was gifted with much more folk lore than the average of his kind. These types have survived in a few communities but are fast becoming extinct.

At the bottom of the plantation hierarchy were the field hands, ignored by traditionalists or conveniently kept in the background. They did the heaviest labor, enjoyed the fewest privileges, and were generally looked down upon by the better situated slaves. Field work, always laborious, was made somewhat more irksome, no doubt, by the enforced regularity and discipline, although a large proportion of the Negroes still prefer to work in gangs and do not object to reasonable supervision. The work of the field hands was not without variety or relief. Tasks had their seasonal variations and occasional interruptions. In addition to the Sabbath there was usually a half holiday on Saturday, with more free time in slack seasons and rainy weather. "Mo' rain, mo' rest." Hands were generally allowed patches of land to cultivate as they pleased

for their own use and perhaps for a local market and were given time off to work them. In general, like other slaves, they were forbidden to leave the plantation except with written permission or accompanied by a white person, a precaution deemed necessary to prevent conspiracies and runaways. Those who dared to stray in the dead of night to visit the quarters of neighboring plantations must watch out for the patrol. Hence the oft-chanted verse:

> Run, nigger, run,
> The *pat*-rol 'll git yer;
> Run, nigger, run,
> It's almost day.

That the lot of the field hands was worse on the whole than that of common laborers under modern systems is open to question. At least they were taken care of through all the vicissitudes of life and hence were relieved of the fear of unemployment, of sickness or old age unprovided-for. Perhaps this sense of security and freedom from worry goes far to explain the very low rate of insanity and crime among slaves. They were always sure of three square meals a day, of a fairly comfortable cabin (which they were required to keep clean), of medical care when needed, of attending religious services (either going to the master's church or having special meetings in the quarters), and finally of a comfortable old age.

"As slaves grew old," says Sydnor, "their tasks were lightened in proportion to their failing strength. On

most of the larger plantations there were Negroes who either did no work or not enough to compensate for their food, clothing and shelter. No instance has been found of a master's failing to care for such slaves and they generally seem to have been treated as well as able-bodied field hands."[16]

One of the authors on a recent visit to the home of a planter in eastern North Carolina observed a typical survival of this attitude. On the back porch sat a Negro "uncle" in his nineties, feebly striking at flies with a home-made fly-swatter.

"This is Uncle Zeke," said the host, "the best nigger I ever had. Even when he was seventy he could outwork most of these younger rascals. But his work days are over and I'm keeping him for the good he *has* done."

"Yas sah, Mr. John, you sho is been mighty good to me. An' de Lawd 'll sholy bless you fo' it."

Zeke had never heard of social insurance.

On the other hand, whether as slaves, wage hands, or croppers, Negroes have often been ruthlessly exploited—as have laborers of other races, in all ages, countries, and climes.

But under slavery families were sometimes separated. Not very often—not nearly as often or as widely as under a capitalist industrial system—but oftener against the will of the parties concerned. This was a real, and sometimes tragic defect of the system, not to be excused by the fact that family ties are not

as enduring among Negroes as whites and that new attachments are more easily formed.

Another phase of slavery much emphasized in the polemics is that of miscegenation. There is little doubt that in the Old South—and perhaps to a greater extent in some communities of the New—the Negro wench often served the same purpose as the white prostitute elsewhere. This was particularly true in the towns. The white male was much more likely to be of the lower than of the upper class. Mencken believes that those mulattoes who have shown exceptional merit in recent years are descendants of blue-blood forefathers. This may be true in some cases, but the mores of the Old South so powerfully condemned the crossing of aristocratic blood with that of the Negro as to make it of rare occurrence. In some cases planters' sons are said to have had relations with housemaids. But the poorer classes of white men, especially in the towns, were the chief offenders. A very doubtful apology for such interracial immorality was that it served as an outlet for white men and thus helped to protect the chastity of white women. Tradition tells us that many of the mulattoes which we see today are the lineal descendants of Yankee troops and Carpetbaggers. The latter especially are said to have left innumerable copies of their physiognomy in the South.

In the eyes of its critics the most grievous fault of the Old South was its sloth in developing industries. Nature had blessed it with boundless resources and a

super-abundance of cheap labor, white and black; and yet withal it had buried its talents in the ground. The planter class was so wedded to its own way of life that it kept on putting its accumulated wealth into more land and more slaves. And so, when the evil day came, the talents were given to those who knew how to multiply them. The Civil War and the destruction of slavery cleared the way for the ten-talent men whose abilities had been held in leash by the slave-plantation system. But for the war—often said to have been a "blessing in disguise"—the section could never have produced the wealth of the Dukes and the Reynolds and the Cannons or the opportunities for the poor whites in the mills.

As a matter of fact, it may well be questioned whether the South's industrialization was ultimately hastened by the war and its aftermath, or whether on the contrary it was actually retarded. Small-scale factories appeared as early in the South as in the North and for a time multiplied more rapidly; then after 1820, with the spread of the plantation system in the South and the shift of capital from commerce to industry in the Northeast, the latter gained a long lead. In the late thirties and early forties Southern interest in the development of industry took on new life and, with the impulse of numerous commercial conventions and the constant prodding of such periodicals as *DeBow's Review*, continued to grow rather steadily to the Civil War. In the decade of the fifties the number of manufacturing plants and the total value of

their products increased more in the South than in the North. In the Carolinas, Georgia, Alabama and Tennessee, the number of bales of cotton annually consumed in textile mills increased sixty-six per cent in the four years, 1855–59. Railway construction in the States that joined the Confederacy was 109 miles per hundred thousand population in the fifties, whereas in the rest of the country it was only 67 miles. The capital for such enterprises in the South was at that time nearly all locally subscribed. As the expansion of the plantation area had about reached its limits, new capital would almost inevitably have gone increasingly into industrial and commercial enterprises. What effect all this would have had upon the slave-plantation system is of course a matter of conjecture. Many writers have maintained that slavery would probably have died a natural death, as it had done before in mature civilizations. It might have undergone a metamorphosis into some system of patriarchal, self-sufficing communities. Or greater emphasis might have been given to further expansion of the slave system, with consequences unpredictable.

Whether or not Southern industrialization would have progressed as far as it has if there had been no Civil War, it seems fairly certain that its development would have been more even, more under local control with local benefits, and would not as easily have forced agriculture into a hopelessly subordinate and exploited status. This the Old South was ready to fight, bleed, and die to prevent. And it was not merely

from economic considerations; it was a matter of maintaining the "gentleman's way of life." It was feared, as Jefferson had warned, that the triumph of industry would bring the debasement of agriculture and hence of rural life. True, there were numbers of planters who eagerly preached and promoted industrial enterprise—for the sake of a more balanced economy, utilization of resources, and sectional self-sufficiency. Others were lukewarm or downright opposed to contaminating the Southern scene with the ugly form and spirit of industrialism. There was agreement, however, that the business man-industrialist must not be allowed to gain the ascendancy in Southern life.

It is interesting to note that the idea frequently emphasized in connection with modern social planning—that of enabling the laborer to spend part of his time in the factory and part on the farm—was actually practised in the Old South. It was done on numbers of plantations having small mills producing for local demands and in a few cases on a more ambitious scale. In the tobacco regions, during the slack season for agriculture, many planters permitted a proportion of their slaves to hire their time in the tobacco factories of neighboring towns, where they lived in boarding houses and were practically free wage hands for the time. Many looked forward to these changes of occupation and environment. Slaves were also permitted to hire their time in various other vocations, such as handicrafts, and sometimes saved enough money in such ways to buy their freedom.

From a social point of view, the prevalence of handicrafts and small-scale factories in the South offered compensations for the disadvantages of industrial inadequacy. The physical, psychic, and social advantages of craftsmanship and diversity of life for the worker over the deadening monotony and strain of highly mechanized labor are too well known to require elaboration. Our growing awareness of the fact is attested by our efforts to revive the former through the TVA and other such projects.

However, the fact remains that the Old South was handicapped by its dependence upon the outside world for much of its manufactured goods, while the North, conversely, was benefited. The latter greatly profited by the exchange of finished products for cheap raw materials. Besides, the South furnished the bulk of the country's exports, though it received directly but a very small share of the imports. Most of the latter went first to the Eastern ports, where further profits were taken upon those resold to the South. The planters became indignantly aware of this in the late ante-bellum period and launched a movement, more vociferous than productive of results, for direct trade with Europe. Its chief effect was further to accentuate sectionalism, or Southern nationalism.

Some writers have held that because of the one-crop system the Old South was dependent upon the North for even a considerable part of its food and other raw products producible at home—as indeed the section has become in more recent times. But the

census reports and other statistical data show that such was not the case in the ante-bellum period. There was some intersectional exchange of such products, but the balance on the whole was favorable to the South. Of the country's total output it produced practically all the rice and most of the sugar (both money crops locally), nine-tenths of the sweet potatoes (mostly consumed at home), three-fourths of the peas and beans, more than half the grain and hogs, about half the horses, seven-eighths of the mules, and more than its share of the cows. The fact that it produced less wheat and white potatoes, which are not easily grown in most of the Southern lowlands, is sometimes misinterpreted where account is not taken of the large production and use of corn, sweet potatoes, and other substitutes. Some planters, especially in the newer regions, did import a portion of their food and feedstuffs, but studies of plantation records and of the census reports for separate counties show that in the main plantations and farms were at least self-sufficing if not surplus-producing as to such supplies as they could economically produce.

Another item in the usual indictment of the Old South—one in which there is a measure of truth but much less than is often assumed—is that it was backward in the development of public education. The myth has somehow gained wide credence that all the Northern states had public free schools from the start while none of the Southern states had them until Re-

construction. In reality, no State in the Union had such a system in the earlier period. By 1800 three slave-holding and four free States had adopted constitutional provisions vaguely promising legislative aid to schools, but they proved of little immediate consequence. It was not until the second quarter of the nineteenth century that the movement for schools entirely free and supported by taxation gained much headway in any section. Even then the laws provided in most cases for local option and mainly local support with some state aid.

The earlier schools, North and South, had been supported partly by the churches, partly by small tuition fees, and partly in some cases by grants-in-aid from state or local governments (in some of the Northern states but more often in the South with a provision that they educate a certain number of poor children without charge). In the rural, "old field" schools of all sections, the teachers were likely to be Ichabod Cranes or worse, poorly prepared and thankful for a meager living with free board from the patrons in turn.

Such schools were known, especially in the South, as academies, which fact was resented by the better order of academies. Many of the latter, bridging the gap from primary school or home training to college, did excellent work. Most of them were founded by the denominations, though in many cases they had shaken off sectarian control by the end of the era. Among the most notable of these was Dr. David Cald-

well's "log college" near Greensboro, North Carolina, said to have prepared for college more men who entered the learned professions and rose to positions of eminence than any other school in the South. In general, such schools were thorough, gave much attention to moral values, and sought to cultivate the amenities of life.

Such Old-World influences as the aristocratic, sectarian, and apprenticeship conceptions of education were more persistent in the South than elsewhere, but all were distinctly on the wane in the late ante-bellum era. Jefferson's plan in revolutionary times, which exerted much influence later, combined with the newer concepts of democracy and state responsibility to prospective citizens that of an aristocracy of merit. All children should have primary schooling free ; those of exceptional merit—preference being given to the ones not able to afford it otherwise—should be put through the academy with all expenses paid (including board, clothing, and books as well as tuition) ; and again the outstanding students should be similarly supported through the university. This would give both incentive and opportunity to the worthy students of limited means and would furnish a trained leadership. The principle came to be applied rather widely, especially in the case of the academies.

There is no question that the South was somewhat behind the rest of the country in the development of common schools, but not as much as is widely believed. In 1860 about seventeen per cent of the white

population of the slave-holding states was in school, against about twenty per cent in the free states. But progress was more rapid in the South than elsewhere in the eighteen-fifties. School attendance doubled in the lower South in the decade. A movement for comprehensive systems of free public schools had begun to show results in the thirties and gained momentum thereafter. In 1839 North Carolina took the lead of the Southern States in providing for a statewide system, some years in advance of several of the Northwestern States. The Tar Heel system, integrated and improved in the fifties, became a model which other Southern States were studying and preparing to follow. It is important to remember in this connection that despite (and partly because of) the missionary zeal of the carpetbaggers, the system did not regain its 1860 level until a full generation after the war.

If there were fewer students proportionately in the elementary schools of the South, there were considerably more in the colleges. In 1860 there were 26,000 students in Southern colleges and 27,500 in Northern, and the latter figure included large numbers from the South. Dodd estimates that "twice as many young men per thousand of population were in colleges in the lower South or in some of the Eastern institutions as were sent from similar groups in other parts of the country." [17] And strange as it seems, the South was spending more per capita on higher education than other sections. It is a well known fact that the state universities started in the South. The first to be char-

tered was in Georgia and the first to be opened was in North Carolina. The leading religious denominations also established colleges; partly as a matter of sectarian pride, partly to afford an educated ministry, and partly from general interest in education and enlightened community leadership. In general such institutions did not have the standing of Harvard and Yale, but many of them achieved notable results. The disparity was not as great as it later became. Several outstanding professors, confronted with offers from more famous schools in the East, preferred to remain in the South because of the pleasanter social environment.

And thus on the eve of the Great Tragedy the South was far better off than it was destined to become again for many years thereafter.

CHAPTER TWO

THE OLD SOUTH PASSES PREMATURELY

BY 1860 THE SOUTH DIFFERED SO RADICALLY FROM THE rest of the United States as to render it culturally and economically a separate nation. To give these cultural and economic facts legal sanction was the fundamental justification for secession and the establishment of the Confederate States of America. The origin of the movement for Southern independence must doubtless be sought in the geographic dissimilarity between the Coastal regions of the Northeast and Southeast. Such cultural and biological differences as there were between the original settlers of the two regions would not go far toward accounting for the divergencies that arose. Geography alone, however, is not determining; it must be considered always in conjunction with other factors of a social nature in any given time and place in order to discover the part it plays in the history of a people, a country, or of civilization in general. Viewed from this standpoint the Civil War cannot be pointed to as Exhibit A by those advocates of geographic determinism who are given to an over-

simplification of their thesis. The same thing, of course, may be said of the economic, moral, or racial determinists—if indeed the last group be entitled to any consideration at all, especially in this connection.

In undertaking to explain the origin of the War between the States, therefore, it is necessary to review briefly each of the forces in turn which contributed to the ultimate cataclysm. At the outset the reader should be reminded that the various factors which united to produce the conflict were constantly interacting upon each other, and it is impossible for the historian to isolate the particular factor which was most important in bringing on the crisis.

The geographic differences between the North Atlantic and the South Atlantic colonies were more marked at the coast than in the interior, but it was at the coast that the original settlements were made, and it was there that for approximately one hundred fifty years the dominant life of the two sections existed. The momentum of this early start had far-reaching consequences, and as each section expanded westward, roughly along parallel lines, the culture patterns which had arisen at or near the coast were carried along into the interior. Doubtless in time these culture patterns would have been modified and, indeed, were in process of modification during the fifty years preceding the Civil War. However, there was sufficient similarity in geographical and environmental conditions between the interior South and the coastal South and between the interior North and the coastal North—

together with the fact that the people in each interior had borne with them to their new homes the culture of the coast—to determine in the main their attitude toward the sectional struggle.

Let us look now at some of those other contemporary factors which need to be combined with the geographic in order to explain why the ways of life in each section diverged to the extent which they did. To say, for instance, that the coastal plain of Virginia and the Carolinas was adapted to large plantations while the coastal regions of New England and in the main of the Middle Atlantic colonies were adapted to small farms is not in itself a sufficient explanation of why the large, slave plantation became the predominating type in the one and the small, subsistence farm in the other. In connection with these factors it must be remembered that for a century or more before the white man came to these shores there had been a revival of the African slave trade. Thousands of Negroes were being taken from their original tropical homes to lands lying south of what was to become the United States. Therefore, it may be categorically stated that but for the existence of Africa and the already flourishing slave trade the geographical conditions in the South could not have produced the large plantation cultivated by Negro slaves. In fact, the early plantation in Virginia took its labor supply not from Africa but from indentured servants brought from Great Britain, Ireland, and to a small extent from Germany. This system was in the nature of the case imperma-

nent. Despite the geographical factors which made for large plantations in the South, had indentured white servitude remained the basis of its labor system the plantation could not have developed very far (given the tendency toward white egalitarianism and democracy which was taking place at the time); and the small farm would almost inevitably have become as typical of the South as of the North.

Again, the condition of world markets was an important consideration. When white men settled in America in the early decades of the seventeenth century, international trade was composed to a very slight degree of raw agricultural products. Virtually every nation of Europe had in cultivation a sufficient quality of land to supply its own population with such basic agricultural commodities as grain and meat. Certain luxuries were imported, but the total of these was insufficient to give rise to a large scale agricultural production of them in any part of the world. By 1607, when the Virginia settlement began, Europeans were already beginning to acquire a taste for tobacco. Somewhat later the older grains of Europe began to be supplemented by rice, and cane sugar gradually began to displace older sweets which from time immemorial had served to supply the wants of the better-to-do classes in Europe. It happened then that these three commodities were adapted to production in one or another section of the South. Wheat and meat had to await the great growth of population in the early nineteenth century before they could become important

articles in foreign commerce. It is a truism of economics that people in search of a livelihood tend to follow the lines of least resistance. While advantages would undoubtedly accrue to the present-day Southern farmer should he become more nearly self-sufficing, it must be admitted that diversified agriculture in an age before modern conveniences was more irksome than the production of a single commodity. Moreover, it did not lead at best to much beyond a crude plenty, and men have ever been desirous of attaining a position in life where some of the luxuries and refinements may be had.

It is therefore difficult to overestimate the importance of the fact that tobacco was the first great agricultural product to become a staple which could be sold for money with which other necessities and luxuries could be procured. While tobacco may successfully be cultivated on a small farm it may equally or perhaps more successfully be cultivated on a large plantation provided there is at hand an adequate and cheap labor supply and provided that the nature of the topography is such as to make the large plantation readily manageable. At some point it is doubtless true that the law of diminishing returns begins to operate and there is therefore a natural limit to the bigness of a plantation. Ordinarily, however, this limit did not begin to be reached in coastal Virginia, Maryland, and North Carolina until somewhere between 25 and 50 workers had been employed. Hence, if it were possible to make a net profit of say $100 a year with one

worker it was possible to make a profit of at least $1,000 a year with 10 workers and $5,000 a year with 50 workers. While adequate statistics are not at hand the available evidence indicates that up to around 50 workers the law of increasing returns was operative. So it would perhaps be somewhat more accurate to say that if a net profit of $100 a year with one worker was made, possibly $1,500 a year could be made with 10 workers and $5,000 a year with 25 workers and under favorable conditions $10,000 a year with 50 workers. This meant that the ambition of every tobacco grower would be to increase his holdings of land and workers at least up to the point where it was roughly apparent that the law of diminishing returns began to operate. It thus appears that the ultimate reason why the large plantation system operated with cheap slave labor took a firm hold in the South Atlantic coastal plain and finally in the Gulf Region was, first, climatic, geographical, and topographical; second, the existence of Africa as a source of supply for cheap slave labor; and third, the fact that tobacco, then rice, and finally sugar were staple commodities which could be sold for money.

To this list, when we come into the nineteenth century, we must add cotton which in the long run became much more important than the other three taken together, but it was on the basis of the other three that an early start gained momentum, and had it not been for them it is highly probable that the introduction of cotton culture on a considerable scale would not of

itself have served to initiate the Negro slave plantation system.

But to the factors discussed above another must be added—namely, that the production of all four of these staples requires pretty nearly an all-year-round labor supply. It seems probable then that even had there been a world market for grain and meat, which initially could be produced advantageously in the Middle Atlantic colonies, the slave plantation system would not have taken hold there to any great extent, because the production of these commodities does not require anything like as much or as steady work as does that of the four great southern staples. The only conditions under which slaves might have been employed advantageously in the production of grain and meat would have been where slave labor was extremely cheap and free labor very expensive. While this was the tendency in colonial times the differential between the cost of slave and free labor was not sufficiently great to overcome the fact that in the production of grains and meat there were at least six months of the year during which any sort of labor, no matter how cheap, could not be profitably employed. There is of course the further factor that for the most part the topography of the Middle Atlantic colonies did not lend itself to the large plantation while that of New England was even more of a hindrance to the development of this type of agriculture.

To summarize, then, those energetic souls who settled in the South and who had worldly ambitions

found their outlet in the development of large scale agriculture, whereas the enterprising New Englander, and to a lesser extent the New Yorker and Pennsylvanian, found it necessary to turn to something else to realize his ambitions. The New Englander naturally took to the sea where first in fishing, then in shipping, and finally in intercolonial and international commerce generally it was possible for him to acquire the means for enhancing his economic and social position in the world. In New York, and to a lesser degree in Pennsylvania, the initial means was the fur trade (also present to a small degree in New England), and from this he proceeded to shipping and world commerce.

This was the situation of the dominant groups in the two regions when the thirteen original states entered into that more perpetual union for which the Constitution provided in 1789. At this time another great medium for the gaining of wealth and prestige was at hand—manufacturing on a commercial scale, which formerly had not been extensively utilized. In the colonial era of hand industry most manufacturing had been of the home and domestic variety. In all regions the finer goods had been imported from England, paid for in the South by surpluses of agricultural products and in the North by the proceeds of the fur trade, ship-building, fishing, and the favorable balance derived mainly from the West India trade and to a less extent from the Mediterranean. When at the beginning of the nineteenth century commercial manufacturing began to arise, its locus became the North-

east rather than the South for a number of reasons. Among these the most important was the fact that the profits from commerce and allied enterprises during the Napoleonic Wars did not find adequate outlets for investment in the same type of enterprises and therefore were available for investment in the new manufacturing industries, principally textiles ; while the profits derived from the older agricultural staples in the South found outlet for investment in land and slaves, in the new staple cotton which spread rapidly in the upland regions of the South Atlantic and then across the Gulf Plain of the deep South, continuing to the very eve of the Civil War when the interior of Texas and Arkansas were being penetrated by cotton culture.

As profits from manufacturing accumulated, there was a steady outlet for their reinvestment in the enlargement of plants, the creation of new plants, and the fabrication of many articles other than textiles. Of these the products of iron became most important, particularly in Pennsylvania. The manufacture of articles made from iron also necessitated the investment of considerable sums in mining iron ore and coal. The new forms of transportation–improved highways, canals, steamboats, and finally railroads–absorbed great amounts of capital in the North, and even in the South some of the profits from agriculture were invested in this sort of enterprise. In the meanwhile considerable sums of southern capital went into small scale commercial enterprises; but even to the end of the ante-bellum period the South bought most of its

manufactured goods from the North or indirectly from Europe through Northern concerns and was to some extent dependent upon Northern credit for the financing of its own enterprises, so that in a way the South was an economic dependency and sphere of influence of the Northeast. This condition was a galling one and was a by no means negligible factor in bringing on the bloody conflict of 1861–65. In this respect at least, the attempt of the South to secede from the North was comparable to the earlier efforts of the American colonists to rid themselves by force of their dependence upon England. In each case it was the belief of the secessionists that political independence would prove but the forerunner of economic independence. /

If we go back now to the period during which the Constitution was formed and the early years of the operation of the Federal Government under its aegis we can see the divergent influences of economic differences which led to the first political alignment, which was in some sort along sectional lines. The financial policy of the Federalist administrations of Washington and Adams was decidedly favorable to northern commercial interests but of little advantage to those of southern agriculture. The small farm interests of the remoter sections of New England and the Middle Atlantic states were also adversely affected by Federalist policies. Therefore, when Thomas Jefferson succeeded in organizing the first great Agrarian

party in this country the seat of its power was in the plantation regions of the South, but its tentacles reached into the rural areas of the Northeast and what was then the Northwest. On the other hand, the Federalist party was not wholly sectional because its aristocratic and conservative attitude appealed to many of the large plantation owners and its policies were advantageous to such commercial interests as existed, and its favorable attitude toward speculators in Western land attracted numerous Southerners who had invested funds in the land beyond the Appalachians. Hence while the first political division in this country was largely sectional it was not wholly so. However, it is not at all beyond the realms of probability that had Jefferson's party been unsuccessful in its efforts to seize control of the Federal Government in 1800, or fairly soon thereafter, there might have been a secession movement in the South within the first two decades of the regime of the Constitution. The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions of 1798 certainly pointed in this direction. On the other hand had Jefferson in practice proved so thorough-going an Agrarian as he had been in theory it is not beyond the bounds of probability that the northern commercial region would have separated from the Southeast, Southwest, and perhaps the Northwest—which last in its economics and personnel was perhaps more akin to the Southeast than to the Northeast. The rumblings and grumblings of Federalist malcontents during the Jefferson and Madison administrations, culminating in

the Hartford Convention of 1814, seem to support this thesis.

Following the War of 1812 and the disintegration of the Federalist party, Republicanism, which Jefferson had brought into being as an agrarian opposition group in the 1790's, rapidly accommodated itself to the commercial interests which had been the core of Federalism. At the same time the rising manufactures of the East came to constitute so influential an element in the new party as to be able to bend it away from its initial free trade tendencies toward protectionism for their infant industries. At the same time that these developments were taking place in the East (approximately 1807–1828), Southern farmers and planters began a rapid exploitation of the rich new cotton lands of western Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, upper Louisiana, eastern Arkansas, and western Tennessee. The new land ranged in price from \$1.00 to \$5.00 per acre, depending on whether it was obtained by original purchase from the states or the Federal government or whether it was bought from speculators. In either case the investment was small, even after the cost of preparation for cultivation was added, in proportion to the cost of producing cotton and the average price obtained for the staple. This situation caused these farmers and planters to tolerate if not approve the favors which manufacturers, merchants, bankers, and land speculators were receiving from the Federal government. It was the fact of this general prosperity for all ambitious elements in American so-

ciety which lay at the base of the so-called "Era of Good Feeling" (1816–1824). In fact Southern planters often found themselves, at least as a side line, interested in banking and land speculating and occasionally in merchandising.

Nevertheless, it was during this period that there occurred the first important contest between the Southeastern and Southwestern planters, on the one hand, and the Eastern manufacturing and commercial groups and Northwestern frontier interest on the other. This was the fight over the question of whether Missouri should be admitted into the Union as a slave state. Planter groups had penetrated into southeastern Missouri before small farmers had gone in considerable numbers into the upper part of the state. This fact made it possible for them to seize control of the territorial government at the beginning, and in drawing up a permanent constitution they had inserted a provision for the maintenance of slavery despite the fact that the new state was not as a whole particularly adapted to the institution. Moreover a majority of land in the state lay to the north of the Ohio River, which had long been established as a boundary between freedom and slavery in that part of the west which lay between the Appalachian Highlands and the Mississippi River. In general people living north of the Ohio had come to regard that part of the Louisiana Purchase territory which lay directly westward as a hinterland for their type of exploitation. They therefore contested vigorously the setting aside of a

considerable portion of that area for slave plantation exploitation. In this struggle they were aided by northeastern representatives and senators, who were just beginning to engage in a bitter struggle with the representatives of the southeastern planters in the Federal congress over making the protective tariff a permanent part of American policy. Here then was joined the first great issue between North and South along almost wholly sectional lines.

To recapitulate, Northeast was fighting Southeast over the tariff ; Northwest was fighting Southwest over slavery extension into the Louisiana territory. Naturally enough the two Southern sections, partly because of similarity of economic interests and partly because of social and kindred ties, formed an alliance. The northeastern and northwestern alliance had fewer economic interests in common, and social ties were not so strong at this time as they subsequently came to be. Nevertheless there was sufficient in common between the two to bring about at least a temporary alliance, which held together until the question of Missouri's admission was settled by a compromise which offset her admission as a slave state by dedicating to freedom all other Louisiana territory which lay north of her southern boundary (36°—30′). Contemporary with this contest but only indirectly connected with it, Maine was separated from Massachusetts and admitted to the Union as a free state, which for the time being left the number of free and slave states in equal balance and consequently of equal power in the

Senate. However, long before this time the Southern population, particularly that part of it which formed the basis of representation in the lower house, was being outstripped in numbers by the Northern population, with the result that if the North would remain united it could outvote the South in the House and elect Presidents in perpetuity. Recognition of this fact came to all parts of the South in connection with the Missouri struggle, and the evidence is overwhelming that the sense of Southern nationalism and solidarity dates from this time.

Of more importance still is the fact that in this long-drawn-out and bitter contest over Missouri's admission derogatory epithets began to be hurled by Northern representatives at the South's peculiar institution. And these epithets were not confined to the institution itself but were also aimed at the supporters and beneficiaries of it. By this time slavery had no direct economic appeal to Northerners and it was so foreign to their system of labor exploitation as to appear unnatural and immoral. In this attitude the general philosophical and theoretical tendency of the age was on their side. The principle of social and political liberty and economic laissez faire, originating in the 18th century and sanctified by the American revolution, had by 1820 come to be accepted in the North on a par with divine revelation. Never accepted fully in the South, this principle by 1820, particularly that part of it which proclaimed all men free and equal, was falling into disrepute. Thus it was from this situa-

tion that the moral ideas of the two sections began radically and with increasing acceleration to diverge. Ere long extremists in either section were taking diametrically opposite views of slavery. In the North abolition societies, which formerly had found some support in the South, were proclaiming the doctrine that slavery was the blackest sin known to man, while in the South, where until this time an apologetic attitude had prevailed, slavery was defended as a positive good, on the basis of which an aristocratic culture could best be supported.

It was not until the rise of Northern Abolitionism that Southerners became highly sensitive to adverse criticism of slavery. As late as the debates in Congress on the Missouri question there had been a tendency to admit that the presence of Negro slaves in the country was unfortunate, and to argue that a saner solution was more likely to arise if the problem were more widely dispersed. Meanwhile the growing profits of cotton culture were producing a potent pro-slavery argument. But it was not until after the first blasts of Garrison's *Liberator*, followed quickly by Nat Turner's insurrection in Virginia in 1831—a frightful reminder of the possible fruits of Abolitionism—that Southerners began to build up a defense mechanism. Thomas R. Dew struck the keynote before the Virginia legislature, defending slavery not as a necessary evil but as a positive good. As slaveholders thereafter were constantly harassed by Abolitionist tirades and haunted by doubtless exaggerated fears of bloody in-

surrections promoted by the latter, they reacted powerfully in defense of their own and developed a degree of intolerance on the subject quite foreign to their spirit in earlier times and even then on subjects less volcanic. If their arguments are not wholly convincing to us today, at least they have important historical pertinence.

Taking for granted the presence of the Negro (and interestingly enough the attitude remained apologetic to the last so far as the English-American origin of the institution was concerned, Southerners even insisting that only New England Yankees had ever engaged in the African slave trade), the best relation between a superior race and an inferior one, the protagonists held, was that of master and slave. After all slavery was only an extension of governmental control. Generally, white people of European origin with centuries of civilization behind them could be depended upon to make an effort without coercion which would lead them to do useful work, at least in sufficient amount to repay society for that part of the community's goods which they consumed. Not so the Negro barbarian, habituated as he was by thousands of years to an enervating climate and a soil which yielded the bare necessities of life without much effort. If left to his own devices he would simply become a charge upon society and refrain from doing enough work to pay for his upkeep. To prevent so unfortunate an eventuality it was necessary to employ coercion, direct and un-

mistakable. The problem might have been solved by his becoming the slave of the community in general, but such was contrary to the genius of Anglo-Saxon institutions. Therefore the natural and logical solution of the problem was to endow private individuals whose intelligence, energy, and good management fitted them for the task with the legal privilege of owning the right to the Negro's labor and with the duty of seeing that he performed a sufficient amount of it to pay his way in the world. It may be remarked parenthetically that to the Abolitionist charge that slavery gave to a master class the ownership of the soul and body of a human being, made in the image of that God whom the master professed to worship, the Southern publicist replied that slavery offered no such ownership. The Negro's soul was his own and when the master had performed his Christian duty of giving him an opportunity to hear that gospel by which alone he could save it (one of the most beneficent influences of slavery, it was said) he had nothing further to do with the matter. As for the body the master claimed no authority further than the right to administer such chastisement as was necessary to insure that the slave would conduct himself with that soberness and decorum befitting his station in life and perform such reasonable tasks as were assigned him.

Long ago that greatest of philosophers, Aristotle, had wisely pointed out that some men are slaves by nature, and it was a grievous error for a state to endow such men with the rights and privileges of free-

men. Such procedure was, so to speak, politically unscientific, and the outcome would surely be disastrous. The difficulty Aristotle had to overcome was a surefire and fool-proof method of determining who was by nature a slave and who a master. Intelligence testing had not been invented in Aristotle's time nor in that of the ante-bellum Southerner. The only men that Aristotle knew were white, and such variations in pigmentation as there were among the Greeks or the neighboring barbarians was no indication of the category to which a man should be assigned. On the other hand, the Southerner was confronted with no such difficulty. That the Negro was by nature a slave none but fanatical Abolitionists could doubt. The color of his skin, his native indolence, his thick-headedness, his kinky hair, his thick lips, his very *slavishness* cried out his nature so loud that he who ran might read. To give freedom and responsibilities of citizenship to a vast mass of such men was simply unthinkable.

The publicists and statesmen found valuable allies in the Christian ministers. Admitting that even the souls of black men were precious in the eyes of the Blessed Redeemer, and sometimes laboring valiantly to bring them to Christ, these kindly and godly men, nevertheless, not only saw nothing unchristian in holding the African in bondage but defended the practice out of the very words of the Scripture. In the first place, had not God punished Ham's unfilial behavior in gazing upon the nakedness of his father, Noah, by turning him black and pronouncing him

cursed and doomed forever to be the hewer of wood and drawer of water for his brethren! And what true Biblical student could doubt that the Negroes were the descendants of Ham? Did not the ancient Jews possess slaves, and were not their laws revealed to their holy men directly by God? Did not the greatest of Christian missionaries, even the blessed Saint Paul, enjoin servants (meaning slaves of course, for all servants in the time of Paul were slaves) to obey their masters and to render unto them that service which was their due? Were not the fugitive slave laws sanctioned by Holy Writ, for did not the same Saint Paul enjoin that a Christian slave be rendered up to his pagan master? How much more just was it, then, to require the return of a formerly pagan slave to a Christian master!

In addition to the political and religious arguments in defense of slavery there was an "anthropological" one. This held that the Negro, while possessing undoubted human characteristics, was so different from the white race as to indicate an entirely separate genesis. This anthropological thesis, while outmoded now, had at that time as good standing in scientific circles as any other. Since, however, it tended to run counter to the religious dogmas of Christendom in general and of the orthodox South in particular, it never gained wide popular acceptance.

Of more significance was a socio-economic doctrine put forward by Fitzhugh in his books entitled *Sociology for the South* and *Cannibals All ; or Slaves with-*

out Masters. In these volumes the author looking upon the labor difficulties then arising in industrialized regions of the world, particularly in England and to a less extent in the American Northeast, concluded that the only satisfactory solution of the relations between capital and labor was the enslavement of the latter. Not only was this a solution of the immediate problem but also it was an answer to such allied questions as unemployment insurance, accident and sickness benefits, old age, motherhood insurance and the like. The author emphasized the fact that men by nature exploited one another (figuratively ate one another—hence the title of one of his books). The exploiters, having finished with their victims, left them to perish miserably or threw the burden of their maintenance upon society in general. Interestingly enough he suggested the very modern idea that each industry should be made responsible for its own casualties. Only by making the worker a slave could this be efficiently and justly accomplished. The state should see to it (and in fact did in the South) that the master of workers should care for them during sickness, seasons of slack work, infancy and old age. Such ideas differ from present-day ones only in that the latter call upon the state to perform these functions directly with funds derived from taxes imposed upon industry (and not infrequently shifted), while the former compelled the masters of industry to perform them directly.

To the Abolitionists with their doctrinaire notions of liberty and equality all these arguments in defense

of slavery were specious, hypocritical, and unworthy of serious consideration by honest and intelligent men. Indeed to them the Southern defense of slavery was an added proof of the degrading influences of the institution upon all those with whom it came in contact. With the founding of *The Liberator*, their jibes and sneers became ever more pointed, bitter, and extreme. In time the outstanding literary men of the Northeast, such as Longfellow, Whittier, Lowell, and Emerson, added their minds and pens to the Abolitionist crusade. Since these men were widely read and praised in their own section Southerners in general and the slave owning class in particular came to regard them as expressing the views of the North as a whole. Year by year, mistrust, antagonism, and downright enmity grew with accelerating pace.

Meanwhile economic and political forces added their influence in bringing the sections to the brink of the abyss. It is not our purpose here to review in detail the political events which finally led to secession. We simply catalog briefly various crises which had a bearing upon the separatist tendency. The struggle over the tariff and the nullification controversy which raged from 1828 to 1833 resulted in South Carolina's placing herself at the forefront of intransigency. The significance of this, while generally understood, is frequently under-emphasized.

Charleston particularly had long regarded itself as an important seat of wealth, good breeding and culture. Whatever the basis of this idea, the significant

fact is that it was deeply felt. Beginning about the time of which we speak it became apparent to Charlestonians that their city was losing out, at least in so far as prosperity and wealth were concerned, in competition with such Northern ports as Boston, Philadelphia, and New York. Indeed statistics of business activity show that it was hardly holding its own with such second rate Northern cities as Portland, Portsmouth, Providence, Newport and New Haven. Heroically, Charlestonians struggled in the 1830's and 1840's to connect by railroad their city with the great Southwestern hinterland and again place it on a par with the Northern cities which were successfully tapping the Northwestern trade. Although these efforts met with some success, the contest in the main was forlorn. With bitterness the Charlestonians acknowledged this to themselves and explained their defeat by maintaining that the policies of the Federal government, particularly the tariff, were responsible. This despite the fact that after 1833 down to the Civil War the protectionist character of the tariff was not particularly noticeable and perhaps had little influence in circumventing Charleston's ambitions. Be this as it may, it is ever true that what men believe to be a fact is of much greater significance in determining their attitude than the fact itself. In the minds of Charlestonians, when the insults of the Abolitionists were added to the injuries of the Federal government, the conclusion seemed inescapable that their only hope for maintaining their self-respect and regaining their

prosperity lay in the formation of a separate Southern Confederacy, in which their city would become the great eastern seaboard metropolis. Therefore, from the penning of the nullification exposition in 1828 to the passage of the ordinance of secession in 1860 Charlestonians and other South Carolinians were in the forefront in urging Southern independence.

The aggressive South Carolinians were supported in their campaign by the course of events. Hardly was the nullification controversy settled by the compromise of 1833 when the question of annexation of Texas presented itself for solution. When that state won its *de facto* independence from Mexico in 1836 and forthwith indicated its desire to become a member of the American union ambitious slaveholders were inclined to act together in favor of its addition. On the other hand, the anti-slavery elements in the North fought the proposition with a virulence that knew no bounds. Their aggression took many forms. When Congress was in session it received daily petitions from anti-slavery societies demanding that no further slave territory be added, that slavery be abolished in places subject to Federal authority, particularly in the District of Columbia, and that the interstate slave trade be forbidden. Literature denouncing slavery flooded the mails, much of it being sent into the South, where the authors hoped it would fall into the hands of Negro slaves and whites sympathetic with the anti-slavery cause. These assaults upon the basic Southern institution were met with a counter attack. Southern post-

masters refused to deliver anti-slavery literature and for a brief while were upheld in their attitude by the postmaster general. When the ruling was changed the local postmasters in many instances quietly defied the rule. In 1836 Southern members of Congress succeeded in having that body pass what came to be known as a "gag resolution" whereby it was ordered that Abolitionist petitions should be laid on the table without reference to a committee. For eight years this gag rule was maintained and became the subject of wide publicity and agitation in Congress, state legislatures, and public gatherings. Many Northerners who had remained indifferent to abolition agitation now threw in their lot against the slave power, because to them it appeared that the slaveholders not only were bent upon keeping the Negro in bondage but were also determined to deny to white men the sacred rights of free speech and petition. And indeed it must be admitted that free discussion of the institution of slavery in the South during the 1830's and thereafter did become virtually impossible.

The contest over the annexation of Texas finally resulted in a Southern triumph when in February, 1845, Congress by joint resolution provided for the admission of the Lone Star State. This victory marked the apotheosis of slave expansion. As we look back upon the matter from the vantage point of almost a century, it is clear to us that even had there been no opposition in the North to slavery extension it is hardly probable that the institution would have ex-

panded much beyond Texas—either Northward, Southward, or Westward. Thoughtful Southerners at the time realized that this was the case for they were not unaware of the climate and topography of the land which bordered Texas in each of these directions. Nowhere was it extensively adapted to the kind of crops suitable for exploitation by slave labor.

From this time on, therefore, the fight of the South was for what they fondly called a principle but which in fact was a chimera.

As is well known the annexation of Texas was followed the next year by war with Mexico which ended in 1848 with the Treaty of Guadaloupe-Hidalgo. By the terms of this treaty Mexico ceded to the United States California and what is now New Mexico and Arizona as well as the southern parts of the present states of Colorado, Utah, and Nevada. Hardly had the war begun when one David Wilmot, a member of Congress from Pennsylvania, attached to an appropriation bill a proviso which, had it become law, would have forbidden the introduction of slavery into any territory to be acquired from Mexico as a result of the war. To Southerners this was the crowning injury. Were not their brave young men pouring out their own life blood like water? Were not Southern armies under Southern generals winning glorious victories for their country? Meanwhile was not the North in general, and New England in particular, standing on the side lines, jeering with a young "Smart Aleck" named James Russell Lowell and his vulgar ignoramus

Bigelow? Was it possible for Southerners to dwell longer under the same roof with men so sodden and impervious to the dictates of honor and fair dealing?

"Let the break come now!" shouted the South Carolinians, and many in other parts of the South were inclined to agree. But it did not come. The discovery of gold in California in 1848 pushed forward the settlement of that region by decades, and the settlers—from North or South—were free adventurers who had no use for slavery. Even the South could not long deny statehood to a territory which had of its own choice renounced the benefits of the "peculiar institution." To do so would be to back-track on the very principle for which they had contended in the case of Texas. But at least they would use the occasion to bury forever the pernicious Wilmot proviso and the Abolitionist demand for the destruction of slavery in the nation's capital. So the Compromise of 1850 left the remainder of the Mexican cession open to slavery, conceded the permanence of the institution in the District of Columbia, paid Texas a goodly sum for her more than shadowy claim to part of New Mexico, and provided for the enactment of a strict Federal fugitive slave law. Except for the solid financial gain for the Texans, all these were Pyrrhic victories—and intelligent Southerners knew it! Well did they understand that Daniel Webster spoke the truth when in his celebrated Seventh of March speech he proclaimed that he would not reënact a law of nature—more binding than man-made law—which forever denied slav-

ery a firm footing in such terrain as was the Mexican cession. And yet they seized it as drowning men will a straw. And what mattered it whether the house servants of Washington be slave or free? And did they not know, from their own experience in conniving at the violation of the law of 1808 against the importation of African slaves, that no law could be enforced in any community where local sentiment was against it? What booted it then whether a law for the recapture of fugitive slaves in free territory were strict or not? In the long run local opinion in the North would not permit the return of slaves and all the force of the Federal Government could not alter the case.

It is idle to state now, as has recently been done by a distinguished contemporary historian, that *realism* should have ruled.[18] Although there were realists in plenty in both sections, their efforts at a peaceable adjustment were doomed to failure because the contest had proceeded to a point at which emotionalism and low politics had superseded reason and realism. The break in the evangelical churches over the slavery question had attested it in the moral and religious realm. The exigencies of the political situation demanded it. The fact that the easiest road to political success in either section had come to be that of imputing to the other hypocrisy and wickedness suggested indeed that an irrepressible conflict was impending. As we look back now, the wonder is not that separation finally came, but that it did not come sooner. How could men long dwell in the same political house when

to one group a virtue was a crime and to the other a crime was a virtue? In the South to aid a neighbor in apprehending one of his runaways was a simple act of friendship and legal duty: in the North it was a sin—virtue lay in helping the poor Negro to escape the hell-hounds who pursued him!

Climatic, geographic, and even economic differences, potent as they were initially, now recede to the background. Webster grasped the significance of the geographic, and throughout the fifties Douglas and others pointed out realistically that the economic differences did not warrant separation and war. It is conceded that, in their origin, moral, philosophical, and even religious principles may have an economic interpretation; but when they once grip men's emotions, economic advantage and life itself will be cheerfully, heroically sacrificed that ideals may live. And this we may call the paradox of history! And perhaps the hope of mankind!

Briefly, as Lincoln long ago pointed out, the situation was this: the extreme Southerner believed that slavery was right and should be extended; the Abolitionist and near-Abolitionist believed that it was wrong and should be confined to its existing limits and be put in the way of ultimate extinction. Between these two groups were the moderates, led after 1854 by Stephen A. Douglas. They believed that there was no irrepressible conflict, and therefore a peaceable solution could be found, at least temporarily, until other interests should supersede both the slavery and

the anti-slavery interests. Until 1860 this group did manage to maintain control, but the growth of other interests was not sufficiently rapid to avert the conflict. To say now that Douglas was right and the extremists on both sides were wrong is simply to beg the question. Unfortunately for mankind, there are no universally agreed upon principles that in all times and places are absolutely right or wrong. There are still in America many people who believe that the anti-slavery group was right; there are some who believe that the pro-slavery group was right, while others believe that a middle course would have been nearer to justice. At the time the three groups were fairly evenly divided numerically; but, due to the exigencies of the political situation in 1860, the anti-slavery group obtained control of the government of the United States. To the pro-slavery group this appeared intolerable; and in order to protect their interests and give *de jure* sanction to Southern nationalism, they resorted to secession.

It is not our purpose to repeat here the well-known story of the Civil War and Reconstruction which together mark the death of the Old South. A few reflections upon the manner of its dying, however, may not be out of place.

Too proudly perhaps and certainly too confidently, the Old South staked its all and lost. And thus its civilization was wrecked beyond any reasonable hope of repair. When the bootless glories of battles were

ended stark tragedy reigned—in black contrast with the inflated prosperity of the North. To remind ourselves of the bare facts of Southern desolation, of human sacrifice and suffering, would appear melodramatic. Even boys in their teens from the flower of the gentry, like the "cadets of Newmarket," had been sacrificed, and with them their possible progeny. If the human sacrifice was much greater proportionately in the South, the economic loss was even more so. The largest item of capital investments was a total loss when slavery was destroyed. Whether the institution was profitable or not is beside the point; it had been the main reservoir of the section's accumulated capital. Land, the next largest item of wealth, if salable at all was worth but a fraction of its former value. Liquid wealth was nearly all consumed in the war. It was represented mostly by Confederate and State bonds and paper money, worthless except as curios for museums. Factories in the wide areas touched by invading armies were demolished; railroads were destroyed, the irons bent around trees or warped in bonfires. Cities, especially Atlanta, Columbia, and Richmond, were largely in ashes. And throughout the countryside of the devastated areas such homes as were left standing were looted of everything valuable and portable.

Reconstruction further confused the issue. It served to humiliate deeply the devotees and beneficiaries of the old order without giving a compensating advantage to its victims. True, as old-time Radical Repub-

licans used to boast, the Civil War and Reconstruction struck from the Negroes the shackles of slavery and endowed them (legally) with the rights and privileges of American citizens. Although many individuals have benefited from the metamorphosis, when a balance is struck for the race as a whole it is doubtful whether they are today much, if any, better off materially than they would have been if the Civil War and Reconstruction had never occurred. There seems to be little doubt that the manner in which the Negroes were freed and the premature enfranchisement of them did much toward fastening upon the South the awful bane of racial prejudice and injustice. The malevolent effects of this prejudice were by no means confined to the Negro race. Much of the backwardness of the South in popular education and protective social legislation may with reason be attributed to the fact that the refusal to establish an excellent system of popular education and enact beneficial social legislation can be traced to the source of racial prejudice.

One isolated incident which occurred in the experience of one of the authors may be illuminating. As a youthful enthusiast for popular education, he joined forces with a group which was undertaking to persuade the people of a Georgia county to consent to a slight increase in the rate of the general property tax in order to provide for a seven months' school instead of the existing five months' term. One of the tax payers whom he interviewed was a poor white named McClung. Mr. McClung had seven children

of school age and possessed property which on the tax books of the county amounted to about a thousand dollars. The new rate of taxation would have increased his burden by the sum of one dollar and a half for which his children would have been given seven instead of five months' schooling. But Mr. McClung was adamant against the proposition, for while he paid tribute to the benefits of education and would have been glad to send his own children to school for seven months instead of five, he declared emphatically, "I ain't gonna vote to tax myself no more than I am taxed jest to send a passel of no 'count, lazy nigger chillun to school two more months in the year when they oughta be working in the fields." This reminds one of the ancient myth of the beneficent goddess who promised to give Envy anything she wished but with the understanding that she would give Jealousy twice as much. As is well known, Envy chose to be deprived of one eye in order that Jealousy might be bereft of two.

We have already alluded to the fact that right and justice are not absolute, but are always relative to a particular time, place and situation. Viewed from this standpoint, slavery and the Southern system were about as just as other social orders have been. This conclusion is reached through a consideration of the classes who were affected by slavery. First of all, the Negroes themselves. As a whole slavery was furnishing to them security and, in general, all the wants of a simple existence. Individual instances of cruelty can

always be cited, but in the main, as we have pointed out above, the system was operated with reasonable consideration and humanity. Such sensitive souls as the Garrisons, Whittiers, and Stowes made the mistake common to their kind of attributing to the slaves their own sensibilities. In putting themselves in the Negroes' place they failed to allow for the vast difference in cultural heritage, acquired responses, and temperamental sensitivity. Many slaves were doubtless happier in their own way than John Brown, Charles Sumner, and Horace Greeley were in theirs. The "poor whites" were not consciously sufferers from the system. The violent condemnation of slavery by Hinton R. Helper from their point of view did not evoke among them a murmur of response. With some exceptions here and there, noticeably in East Tennessee and the Piedmont and mountainous sections of the slave territory, the yeoman farmers, whether they possessed a slave or two or not, were contented with the system. As for the middle and upper class planters, it goes without saying that since they were the chief beneficiaries of the old order, it was for them, at least in their own eyes, an almost unmixed blessing.

Therefore the system did not fall of its own weight nor die because of any internal disease gnawing at its vitals but was overthrown by an outside system which it had more or less unconsciously offended. To this outside system, it was not in reality dangerous because as we have seen in the very nature of the case it could do it no serious damage. Had it continued it probably

would have retarded the gaining of over-weening power by the industrial capitalists and given to agriculture a more articulate voice in governmental policy. But it could hardly have prevented the steady if somewhat slower march to power of the capitalistic group in the North and West and even in time in the South. Now, when a system dies of its own internal diseases, however tragic it may be to certain individuals involved in it, as for instance the nobility of the *Ancien Régime* in France or the old landed aristocracy and governmental autocracy of pre-revolutionary Russia, there is, socially speaking, no fundamental tragedy. The Old South died from no internal disease and therefore its death was a tragedy. Instead of being given decent burial, Reconstruction subjected its body to mutilation and indignity. Even the New South did not give it proper interment.

The Homeric Greeks believed that the spirit of a man wandered disconsolately until his body received the religious ceremony of burial. Thus it was with the Old South. For decades its ghost has stalked abroad to bedevil in some sort the placidity of Southern and, to a less extent, of American life. It has recently been remarked that history is not only a curator but a curative of the past. If that be true, we trust that we have rendered some slight service of a curative nature. Or to put it otherwise, we have done our best to give the Old South decent burial with all the rites to which its by no means useless life entitled it. We neither

praise nor blame it or its enemies but insist that it did not deserve the hard fate of being cut off in the flower of its age. From the way of life which history and tradition ascribe to it we may glean much for the creation of a better and a newer South.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PAST DOES NOT COME BACK

THE QUARTER-CENTURY THAT FOLLOWED THE RESTORATION of native white rule in the South was marked by a conflict between those who looked to the past and those who looked to the future.

The past was the Old South, seen through the glamour of traditions that grew ever brighter under the spell of political orators, romantic writers, and reminiscent veterans. The physical wreckage of war and the social upheaval of its aftermath had left a sorry mess to show what the North could do for the South—a mess that stood in shocking contrast with the idyllic scene of the Old South idealized. But moping would not avail. The ante-bellum scene must be restored as far as the new dispensation allowed. Slavery was gone, to be sure, but now that the carpetbaggers were out of the way the "niggers" could be "put in their place." Still presumed to be an inferior and naturally servile race, they could again be made the basis of wealth and leisure for the white South. Agriculture must remain supreme, for only upon a

basically agrarian economy could the civilization of the Old South be restored. And the markets of the world would still look to the South for cotton, tobacco, and sugar. Industries might have a steady and wholesome growth as the handmaidens of agriculture, but their rôle must be kept subordinate. The tranquillity of Southern life must never be upset by the ugly industrialism and the mad commercialism of the Northern city. Some day, perhaps, the better elements in the North would join hands with "the white man's party" in the South, and Southern rights would be respected at Washington as they were in the days of old. And so the agricultural South would carry on in spite of the war and the post-war amendments. Above all, it would not give up its superior way of life or its cultural self-respect and self-reliance. It would rebuild upon its own foundations, not those which the carpetbaggers had sought to establish.

The future was the North. It pointed the way to progress and prosperity. And had not the great God of battles decided in favor of progress and prosperity! The old South, "misguided perhaps, but beautiful in her suffering," had "found her jewel in the toad's head of defeat," said Henry W. Grady, chief apostle of the New South. She had clung to an agricultural economy when God and the civilized world had decided in favor of industrialism. But now that she had learned her lesson, she would no longer sleep over her opportunities. Her "boundless" resources of coal and

iron, granite and marble, timber and turpentine would soon make her rich if she set about quickly to exploit them. She would challenge the spinners of Massachusetts and the iron makers of Pennsylvania. For along with her vast, undeveloped physical resources she had great undiscovered human resources in the persons of the poor whites.* Bring the mills to the cotton—and to the poor whites! The latter could easily be taught to tend spindles and looms, and their services could be had very cheaply. To give them jobs would be an act of charity and local patriotism. And so with occasional tributes to the memory of the Lost Cause, the prophets of the New South preached from the text, "Agree with thine adversary quickly"—and follow his example.

The divergent aims of the two groups had appeared to some extent in ante-bellum times and were in process of development during Reconstruction, but not until the new era was the tradition of the one perfected or the gospel of the other popularized. The custom of observing Memorial Day which furnished the chief occasion for glorifying the Old South and the Confederate cause began before the close of the Civil War. Associations of Confederate veterans appeared locally early in the new era, but they were not brought together into a Southwide organization until 1889. The United Daughters of the Confederacy was

* When used without quotation marks this term is intended to include the white tenant farmers and other poor hangers-on in addition to the "poor whites" proper.

not formed until 1894, but its soul existed long before its incarnation. Thomas Nelson Page began publishing his romantic stories of the Old South in 1884. On the other hand, Henry W. Grady made his famous Boston speech on the New South in 1886, though his writings for Northern and Southern newspapers had for years exerted a strong influence in favor of sectional reconciliation and Southern industrialization. To these aims was added in time a forward movement in public education, but this did not become an outstanding tenet of the new gospel until the eighteen-nineties. Meanwhile the rapid rise of industry stood out most prominently as both cause and effect of the New South movement.

Political conditions and psychic attitudes seemed to favor the Old South group at the beginning of the era of home rule. The Democratic party, which had "saved civilization" and won for itself perpetual power in the Southern states, must remain true to the old traditions, for they were its very soul. Its candidates for office never failed to eulogize the heroes in grey. They themselves in most cases could point ("with pardonable pride") to their glorious war records in the cause of the Confederacy. Such records were all but essential to political preferment, particularly in the lower South, for a generation. If in the economic policies of the party the rising business groups were quietly stealing a march on planters and farmers, this fact was scarcely perceived for a time.

On questions that held the foreground in politics during the first half of the era, business men were generally as conservative as their rural brethren of the Democratic faith. They were quite in accord on the principle of keeping the Negro "in his place," and they agreed in the main on policies of laissez faire, cheap government, low taxes, and hence meager support of schools and other institutions. Most of them seem to have forgotten the rather hopeful educational movement of the late ante-bellum period. The aristocratic idea of education was revived, and public schools were often damned as "yankee innovations" foisted upon the South by the carpetbaggers. And now that a sadly impoverished people would have to maintain two separate systems for the two races, it took more weight than the apostles of enlightenment could gather to pry appropriations above the niggardly figures at which they remained throughout the South to the end of the century.

The reactionary character of the Democratic party in the South at that time, together with the fact that many of the ante-bellum leaders remained prominent in its councils, gave rise to the sobriquet "Bourbon Democracy." This term, the implications of which were so nearly in accord with outward appearances but so misleading as to significant facts, may be taken as Exhibit A of popular misconceptions of what was actually going on in the South. It was first popularized by Northern Republicans and was meant to imply that the Democratic South, Bourbon-like, had

"learned nothing and forgotten nothing"; that the planter oligarchy with hearts unchanged had returned to power, even as the Bourbons had done in the Europe of 1815. On the surface all these things seemed to be true. From our present perspective, however, and in the light of recent studies, we can easily see that neither the planters as such nor the agricultural groups as a whole any longer dominated the South—politically, economically, or socially. They had their way only in so far as they were in accord with or had become identical with the newly ascendant business groups. For the center of gravity in the South was shifting from country to town.

The former dominance of agricultural interests in general and of Southern planters in particular had first been broken in the country as a whole. The ascendency of the planters at Washington in the antebellum period had been based in large measure on a coalition of the agricultural South and West. As this coalition became increasingly difficult to maintain in the fifties because of the slavery quarrel, the planters came to depend more and more upon an alliance with Eastern commercial groups. The rise of the Republican party completed the breach between South and West. The new alliance of the industrial and financial East with the agricultural West in the Republican party was a matter of give and take, but mostly take on the part of the East. The latter, which had formerly opposed free homesteads in the West because it did not wish to see its labor supply drawn away,

had been amply supplied with foreign immigrants by the fifties and so yielded this point to the West. It had also embraced the anti-slavery crusade, toward which Eastern business had formerly been lukewarm if not hostile. The West, in turn, had swallowed the protective tariff along with the lavish generosity of the federal government toward banks, railroads, and corporate enterprises in general. As it turned out the West was unequally yoked, but that made little difference in election results so long as the sacred elephant was worshipped as the savior of the Union and the destroyer of slavery. The Democratic party in the West was a broken stick on which the "Bourbons" could not depend. In the East the party still had much vitality. Its voting strength there was supplied by municipal machines such as Tammany, and its financial support came mainly from those commercial groups which were predominantly interested in foreign trade and hence opposed to the Republican protective tariff. And so when the "Bourbons" yoked up with the East in what became the Cleveland Democracy, agricultural interests got only one major concession: a leaning—a rather wobbly one—toward free trade.* This political alliance naturally aided, and in

* Coal and iron Senators from Alabama and sugar Senators from Louisiana were among the log-rollers who helped to devitalize the Wilson Tariff Bill of Cleveland's second administration. Congressman Tate, of Georgia, owner of large marble quarries, once carried samples of his product to Washington as exhibits of an infant industry that cried for protection. Chided for deserting his party platform, he is quoted as saying, "Oh, I'm a free-trader *in general*, but this is *my* marble!"

turn was aided by, the rise of Southern business and industry and the New South movement. The Old South worshippers got at least a psychological compensation from recalling how Northern, particularly Eastern, Democrats had been more or less sympathetic toward the South during the Civil War and Reconstruction.

If Southern statesmen in Washington had joined the chorus of business prosperity, those in their own state capitols were playing only second fiddle—and that usually in a minor key—to distressed agriculture. Very few of the outstanding leaders in Southern politics were primarily interested in agriculture. A number, to be sure, were planters, generally survivors of the old "slaveocracy." Available evidence seems to indicate, however, that the chief profits of these were no longer derived directly from agriculture but from merchandising (their own tenants forming an important nucleus of customers) and from other forms of business enterprise.

In Georgia, for example, not one member of the ante-bellum triumvirate remained a dominant figure in politics. Cobb died in 1870; Stephens and Toombs lived on to the mid-eighties, but both were generally at odds with the new Democratic regime, whose leaders they referred to contemptuously as "exploiters of resources" and "Democrats tainted with scalawagery." Of the new triumvirate, only one member was a planter-aristocrat—General Alfred H. Colquitt. He was one of the largest planters in the state, but he also

had wide business interests and was a railroad promoter. General John B. Gordon, another of the triumvirate, well represents the Confederate hero type whose political and social eminence rested upon past glories but whose financial fortunes came from enterprises that looked to the future. To Georgians he was the embodiment of all that was sacred in the Lost Cause, was the most romantic figure in the Ku Klux Klan, and for years was commander of the United Confederate Veterans. But he was a "developer of resources," and not a tiller of the soil even by proxy. If Joseph E. Brown had a less glorious record behind him than either of the others, he was the most successful of the trio in heading "forward-looking" enterprises. Of humble origin, he rose to power in the fifties, and was the war governor of the state. Then, alas, he became "tainted with scalawagery" and with very questionable state-aid-to-railroads schemes. But he soon recanted his apostasy, came back into the Democratic fold, and was remarkably successful in both business and politics, which he combined to great personal advantage. He was at one time president of the Western and Atlantic Railroad, the Southern Railway and Steamship Company, the Dade Coal Company, the Walker Coal and Iron Company and the Rising Fawn Iron Works. For years his political influence was such that he was able to lease the state's convicts for labor in his coal mines at the ridiculous sum of seven cents a day per convict. The governor's mansion was occupied by one or another of this trio

during the greater part of the period 1872–1890. Meanwhile, at least one and usually both of the senatorial togas fell to their several lots. Colquitt was the only governor of the state during those eighteen years who represented agricultural interests (except Stephens, who served for only a few months). In 1880–81 only thirty-eight per cent of the members of the Georgia legislature had any agricultural interests at all, and only about twenty-five per cent depended solely upon agriculture ~~for a livelihood~~. As far as the facts have been made available, Georgia seems to be typical as to the Old South appearances and New South interests of the "Bourbons." The effects of this upon governmental policies will appear in later pages.

The passing of political power from agricultural to business groups reflected a similar shift in the economic and social life of the South, all of which stemmed from the Civil War and its outcome. While the general collapse involved all groups, the ruin of the farmers—both great and small—was most nearly complete and most lasting. The billions of dollars once invested in slaves was gone beyond hope of recovery. Land itself had lost the greater part of its nominal value and except in a few favored localities was virtually unsalable. Wide areas had been left in havoc by the armies; farmhouses, barns, and fences had fallen into decay from unavoidable neglect. Negro laborers had been pauperized and demoralized by the agencies of Reconstruction. And so it was not until

the late seventies that the cotton crop again reached its pre-war level.

But the most serious handicap of the farmer—one from which business interests derived a temporary (and short-sighted) profit—was the credit situation. Practically all liquid capital in the states of the one-time Confederacy had been staked on the Lost Cause and was now as hopelessly lost as the Cause itself. Hence the section was dependent upon outside credit to finance the rebuilding of its economic life from the bottom. And the bottom was agriculture. The farmer would ultimately pay not only the interest, commissions, and the like charged by outside creditors to Southern bankers, brokers, and factors, but also the profits of wholesalers, retailers, and the whole chain of middlemen that stretched from him to the Northern or foreign money-lender. As his land was generally unacceptable as security and he had little else to pledge except his hoped-for crop, he was driven to the pawn-shop system of crop-liens, which remained a curse of the agricultural South ever after.

To obtain credit for the purchase of supplies during the year, the farmer gave a mortage, or lien, on his forthcoming crop to the merchant who "ran" him. If he was a large planter and was able to obtain wholesale credit, he probably became a merchant himself, "ran" his own tenants and possibly neighboring farmers and their tenants (if any). Or perhaps he, like the small farmer, was dependent upon a supply merchant in a neighboring town. In any case the merchant or

planter-merchant thought it necessary, because of the uncertainties of such business and of the tolls he had to pay higher up, to charge from twenty to fifty per cent more on an average than the normal cash price for goods advanced in this way. As the purchases were made along through the year and the payments were made in the fall, the average item ran for less than six months; so the unfortunate victim was paying from forty to a hundred per cent interest.

The system not only devoured his profits and kept him in perpetual debt, but also held him in bondage to his creditor. The latter would condition his advances on the amount of land to be planted in cotton, or whatever the money crop was in that region. As the merchant was usually conservative in estimating the probable yield, the farmer was likely to give over so much of his land to the money crop that he could not produce enough supplies for his own requirements. These must then be added to his account at ruinous prices. And so he was caught in the toils of a system from which it was practically impossible to extricate himself. All the advice of well-meaning "experts" to plant less cotton and grow more supplies was easy in theory but hard in practice. This goes far to explain why the one-crop system was more firmly fixed upon the South than ever before.

When the crop-lien victim gathered his harvest it was not his own. It must go at once to the merchant. If, as was often the case, it proved insufficient to cover his indebtedness, he must renew his bondage for an-

other year to the same man. If he were so fortunate as to "pay out" he might have the doubtful privilege of choosing another creditor.

Thus from eighty to ninety per cent of the farmers in the South remained in the toils of debt and dependence from the Civil War to the twentieth century. Some of the planters, as we have said, were able to form fortunate connections in the business world, set up supply stores themselves, and parcel out credit to their tenants and neighboring land-owners. The interests of these were straddled between agriculture and business, with increasing emphasis on the latter. Besides, as real estate mortgages came in time to supplement crop-liens, merchants and other creditors in town obtained possession of farms and plantations through foreclosures. This tendency was especially marked in the hard times of the nineties. To what extent the farms were sacrificed for debt and proprietor farmers became tenants cannot be determined from the census, for every holding (proprietor or tenant) is listed as a "farm." Hence to some extent the figures below represent the further division of plantations into tenant farms.* It is well established, however, that plantations were crumbling and smaller farms passing into the hands of creditors.

The census of 1890 indicated by its tabulations that considerably fewer farms were mortgaged in the

* According to the census, in the states of the Confederacy plus Kentucky the percentage of farms operated by their owners fell from 68 in 1880 to 46 in 1900. The figures for separate states are as follows:

South than in the West. This led many people to the superficial conclusion that Southern agriculture was less "in the red" than Western. It was explained by the Census Editors, however, and the point was elaborated by George K. Holmes, M. B. Hammond, and others, that many Southern mortgages were never recorded and that creditors often took "deeds to secure debt" instead of mortgages. Besides these and the growing prevalence of crop-liens, the pledging of chattels multiplied, more than trebling in some states of the lower South during the eighties. Pitiful heaps of such rubbish often disfigured the courthouse squares.

Early in the eighties a number of new loan agencies appeared in the South which seemed to offer great promise of relief. They announced that they would lend money to farmers at seven or eight per cent.

PER CENT OF ALL FARMS OPERATED BY OWNERS

	1880	1900
Virginia	70.5	60.9
North Carolina	66.6	50.5
South Carolina	50.0	33.9
Georgia	55.2	36.3
Florida	69.1	64.7
Kentucky	73.6	58.6
Tennessee	65.5	51.2
Alabama	53.2	36.3
Mississippi	56.2	34.4
Louisiana	64.8	38.6
Texas	62.4	43.1
Arkansas	69.1	47.1
Average	63.0	46.3

It turned out, however, that they would first deduct twenty per cent as a "commission for negotiating the loan," give the farmer eighty dollars in return for a note for one hundred with interest. "Nothing shows more clearly," wrote Hammond, "the need for better credit facilities in the South than the willingness on the part of the more thrifty and industrious farmers to borrow money on such terms rather than to submit to the high prices and dictation of the advancing merchants." [19]

The hard terms which supply merchants felt compelled to exact were to some extent justified by the extortions which they in turn endured from the upper reaches of the credit hierarchy and the risks which they had to run with their hapless debtors. They were usually required by the banks to pay one and a half per cent monthly for discounts or short-term loans. They could always expect to lose some of their accounts. A shiftless tenant would use up his credit allowance, neglect his crop until it was smothered with grass, and then steal away to parts unknown. Another would have sickness in his home, still another would be caught in the toils of the law and face a choice between a fine and a chain-gang sentence. If the merchant refused aid he would lose what he had already advanced; if he gave it he might rescue this, or else lose still more. But "the road to wealth in the South," wrote George K. Holmes in 1893, "outside of the cities and aside from manufacturing, is merchandising." [20]

The main reason why the farmer found it so hard to get out of debt was the fact that the prices of his products were almost constantly falling. From its eminence of a dollar a pound at the close of the Civil War, cotton had fallen by 1871 to eighteen cents on the local markets. It averaged about twelve cents during the seventies, nine cents during the eighties, and seven during the nineties. In the mid-nineties it went below five cents a pound. It often happened that the more plentiful the harvest, ~~the smaller~~ the ~~total~~ selling price. The following table illustrates this point:

Periods	Average Annual Production in U.S. (Millions of Bales)	Average Annual Selling Price (Millions of Dollars)
1870–74	3.88	267
1875–79	5.00	223
1880–84	6.09	278
1885–89	6.88	335
1890–94	8.37	304
1895–99	9.83	302

The prices of other farm products declined in almost the same proportion.

Even if these losses had been offset—and they were not entirely so, especially in the case of credit accounts—by the decline of prices of things which the farmers had to buy, they like other debtors were seriously handicapped by the rising value of the dollar. A debt equivalent to ten bales of cotton in 1871 re-

quired eighteen bales to cover it five years later. The same proportion held for one contracted in 1889. The dollar appreciated in purchasing power about seventeen per cent every five years on an average from 1865 to 1895. So the farmers were caught between shrinking incomes on the one hand and appreciating debts on the other.

They were also fleeced by railroads and other corporations. The story of watered stock, discriminating rates, bankruptcies to squeeze out small stockholders, and the defaulting of state-guaranteed bonds at the expense of tax-payers is too well known to require repetition. Suffice it to say that the Granger movement, which initiated state regulation of railroads and middlemen in the West during the seventies, accomplished very little in the South. The struggle to regain and uphold white dominion overshadowed it. Hence it was not until the rise of the Farmer's Alliance in the late eighties that any appreciable progress was made along these lines.

A further grievance of the farmers, and also a reason why the South was backward in those years in providing educational and other opportunities, was the antiquated tax system. There were then no income or inheritance taxes. Property and polls were still the chief reliance. This meant that the burden fell upon the backs of the farmers out of all proportion to their ability to pay. Their property could not be concealed, while urban property, other than real estate, largely escaped. For example, all the jewelry and plate

in the city of Atlanta were valued for taxation in 1890 at only $173,000. Although it was the largest distributing center between Baltimore and New Orleans, it was credited with only three million dollars' worth of taxable merchandise. Numbers of small towns which did a supply business with farmers reported no merchandise at all. And any man who reported stocks and bonds had either a powerful conscience or a weak mind. So long as Southern state and local governments depended so largely on impoverished agriculture for their funds, they could hardly spend very much for social betterment. The "Bourbon" Moses was smiting the wrong rock.

While agriculture languished in the South, industry went forward with remarkable strides. The total capital invested in manufacturing enterprises of all kinds in the South nearly quintupled between 1880 and 1900, the number of employees trebled, and the value of products more than trebled despite falling prices. By using index figures and reducing to the same price level, it appears that the output of goods quadrupled. If we compare this growth with that of the country as a whole, it is not so impressive, although it is still significant if we bear in mind the rapid progress of industrialization during this time in the North and especially in the North-central states. The following table shows such comparisons. It may be noted that in most particulars the section still had not regained by 1900 its relative standing as of 1860.

MANUFACTURE—PERCENTAGE OF TOTALS FOR THE U. S.
IN THE SOUTH

YEAR	CAPITAL	AV. NO. WAGE-EARNERS	TOTAL WAGES	COST OF MATERIAL	VALUE OF PRODUCTS	NO. ESTAB-LISHMENTS
1860	11.5	10.1	9.2	10.6	10.3	17.2
1870	6.6	9.1	5.8	6.5	6.6	15.4
1880	6.9	8.2	5.6	6.3	6.3	14.6
1890	7.3	9.7	7.1	7.4	7.5	13.1
1900	9.7	12.3	8.5	9.1	9.1	16.4

The rise of the cotton textile industry was the most spectacular. Between 1880 and 1900, the number of spindles in the South increased nearly seven-fold; the number of looms, more than eight-fold. The increase was not only absolute but also relative, as compared with the rest of the country. In 1880, only five per cent of the spindles and five per cent of the looms of the United States were in the South; in 1900, 23 per cent of the former and 24 per cent of the latter were in the South. South Carolina, North Carolina, and Alabama had come to rank second, third, and fourth respectively among the states in the manufacture of cotton goods.

Much progress had been made in other industrial fields also. By 1900 Alabama ranked second in the production of coke, and fifth in iron and steel. Kentucky was second and North Carolina was third in the manufacture of tobacco. Louisiana was first in the

manufacture of bags other than paper, and second in the refining of sugar. Georgia ranked first and Florida second in the production of turpentine and rosin, while Texas stood first and Georgia second in the newly developed cottonseed oil industry. These last, of course, were distinctly Southern industries.

We have indicated some of the reasons for the rapid rise of industry in the South during this period: Agriculture was relatively unprofitable, slavery no longer absorbed capital, and the prophets of the New South were pointing the way to Progress and Prosperity by the way of Smoking Chimneys. Other reasons, more or less corollary to these, were the desire to help impoverished towns and communities to get on their feet, and to give employment to the poor whites. Of course there was also the old argument of the proximity to raw materials, not to mention the lure of profits to promoters and investors.

As Professor Broadus Mitchell has pointed out, the fact that the industrialization of the post-bellum South was deliberately undertaken had important consequences. Elsewhere, industry had sprung up more spontaneously. In the New South it was not only invited but strenuously sought after. Once aroused, communities were willing to make almost any sacrifice, material or human, to foster the new enterprises. That is one reason why the South was slow to admit of social control. Communities were loath to apply restraints lest they hamper in some measure the gratifying growth of the new industries. How often, when

a child-labor law or some other regulatory measure was pending in a Southern legislature, the chorus went up, "If you pass that law you will drive capital from the state ; the mills will move over to Alabama!" (Or perhaps it was into some other state that they would flee.) Such arguments, of course, were not confined to the South, but they had exceptional strength in that section.

Nearly all the mills that arose during this period were local enterprises, financed in large measure by local capital. The notion, once prevalent and still widely held, that they were mainly fostered by Northern capital has been shown to be erroneous. They were usually financed on a "shoe string" plan with a maximum of credit and a minimum of capital. The eagerness of towns to get them and the readiness of people to invest their small savings in them can hardly be exaggerated. There was something of the fervor of a Methodist revival. In fact, in at least one case, a mill was born at a revival service. In the early eighties an evangelist in Salisbury, North Carolina, fired his congregation with the message :

"NEXT TO THE GRACE OF GOD,
WHAT SALISBURY NEEDS
IS A COTTON MILL!"

Salisbury got the cotton mill. The evangelist was its promoter.

The early mills were built in most cases in the outskirts of bedraggled towns, or even in the open coun-

try, adjacent to a railroad. Owing to financial limitations, it was necessary to obtain cheap land. It was also necessary to provide houses for the workers. Hence the company bought sufficient land—usually at a song—to build an entire village. Equipment and supplies were obtained partly on credit and partly in exchange for stock in the new enterprise. Further economies were effected by establishing a company store. Goods could be bought on credit and advanced to the workers against their pay-day. This would reduce the cash turnover. In fact, it not infrequently happened that between the rent, though it was low, and the supplies-account, the family income of laborers was entirely taken up. It was necessary to guard the advance very closely, in other words to ration the supplies, just as the landlord or supply-merchant had to do in the case of crop-lien accounts. The one system was a natural carry-over from the other.

The mill village was usually unincorporated, so law and order were preserved by officers in the employ of the company. As it owned practically all the taxable property, it built—and controlled—the school. It usually built the church, or churches, and provided most of the funds for maintenance. In time it developed Y.M.C.A.'s, Y.W.C.A.'s, playgrounds, and other community centers. Thus the mill became the center and circumference of the workers' existence.

There is no doubt that this paternalistic arrangement was a natural outgrowth of conditions and that

it was well meant. Some of the evils which grew out of it will be discussed in the next chapter.

The labor supply for the textile mills was drawn almost entirely from the poorest class of whites; mainly the landless, drifting "croppers" and hangers-on, with a few of the marginal and sub-marginal proprietor-farmer type. Most of them were scarcely of the type described in Chapter I as "poor whites." They may have been as poor and hopeless as the latter, but they were generally not as shiftless. However, as the term came to be broadened in its application it embraced them in the minds of many. Contrary to the widespread notion, most of them did not come from the mountains; numbers of them did, especially if the mill were located near them, but the great majority came from within a radius of twenty or thirty miles from the mill.

And what was their attitude toward their new situation? As a rule they were proud of their jobs and grateful to their employers. The first generation in the mills had almost no class feeling except that they were socially ostracized by the people of the neighboring towns. They had no conception of the Labor Movement. If their standard of living was low, it seemed good in comparison with what they had formerly known. If it was lower than that of mill workers in other parts of the country, they did not know it. If their hours were long, they had been long on the farm. If their children worked in the mill, they had

also worked on the farm. Their standards of comparison were those of the wretched poverty that they had always known before ; so it is not surprising that they did not offer a fertile soil for the labor "agitator," or even for the movement of dissent that arose in their section in the late eighties and early nineties, inspired by the Farmers' Alliance and the People's Party.

Poor whites in the mills ; poor whites on the farms : somehow they had never seemed to belong. Why? Was it in the blood? They were the same race as the planters ; they were the same race as the merchants and professional men who owned the mills. Perhaps it was largely because they had never had a chance. They had been handicapped by the competition with slave labor ; they had not been helped by the competition of the free Negroes, who were their actual or potential competitors at the bottom of the credit hierarchy in agriculture—where both were toads under the harrow.

And what of the free Negro? Why was he not employed more generally in the mills? It has been widely held that the whites proved more apt, more dextrous, more careful, and more dependable. Two instances are cited by Professor Broadus Mitchell of mills that were operated with colored labor, one with colored managers and the other under white supervision. Neither of them prospered, but as both were handicapped in other ways the two do not prove the inferiority of Negro labor. The white superintendent complained most about absences from work. The Ne-

gro workers, he said, could not be counted upon to show up when they promised to do so. The manager of a hosiery mill in which Negroes were employed said that they turned out more "seconds" than whites, and were in general less careful workers. On the other hand, there is some testimony that Negroes made good workers.[21] The evidence is scarcely sufficient for a safe generalization either way. Perhaps there is better point to the explanation that white labor was abundant and that the desire to furnish a "new avenue of opportunity" to unfortunates was felt more strongly by white managers and communities for people of their own race. And it was not feasible to work the two races side by side, for the one compensation which the poor whites cherished as against their low social standing among their own race was their vaunted superiority to the Negro. If they had needed to be reminded of this, politicians would never have let them forget it.

While the Negroes were not generally employed in the textile mills, they were widely used in the tobacco factories. Most of the hand-work in the manufacture of tobacco called for little or no skill, but some of the processes were facilitated by a sense of rhythm, with which the Negro is notably gifted. Observers have described long rows of Negroes working at such tasks, singing or humming as they worked and timing their motions to the rhythm of the song. The all-pervading smell of tobacco seemed not to annoy the Negroes,

who apparently are less sensitive to odors than are white people. Wages in these factories were even lower than in the cotton mills; working and living standards were worse. Unions arose in the early nineties, but they were soon destroyed or rendered impotent. The rise of the Tobacco Trust in the eighties clinched the dominance of capital and management in this field.

It was not until the turn of the century that movements against child labor and for compulsory education showed appreciable strength or promise in the South. Public schools were pitifully starved and puny. In the late nineties some of the Southern states were spending less than fifty cents per capita for schools, and none was spending much more. Nearly all the rural schoolhouses were one-room shacks with practically no equipment beyond home-made benches and desks. The teachers, whose annual salaries were in many cases lower than the rental received by the states for convict labor, generally knew little more than the children whom they tried to teach. In the states included in our study, fewer than sixty per cent of the children were enrolled in 1897 and fewer than forty per cent were in daily attendance during the brief school term. In rural communities the term was generally from two to four months. Even in towns there were no public high schools in the South of standard grade. In North Carolina, twenty-six per

cent of the adult whites were illiterate, and the average was not much lower in other Southern states.*

Colleges and universities also compared poorly with those of other sections. In 1897, only one-tenth of the productive funds and one-seventeenth of the physical equipment of such institutions in the country as a whole were in the South. Professors' salaries were much lower than in other sections. Hence much of the best native talent was drawn away. There were some notable exceptions—men to whom the ties of sentiment were stronger than the lure of higher salaries and wider fame. Some of these, however, were in time driven out by heresy-hunters. This was more common in denominational than in state institutions, for the South was more sensitive to—or at least more aware of—religious than political and economic heresies.

Some of the reasons for this backwardness have been suggested above: the post-war poverty; the antiquated tax system; the necessity of maintaining two separate systems of schools for the two races; and the

* PUBLIC SCHOOL STATISTICS, 1889–1890
(In thousands, except days school kept)

SECTION	POPULATION	NO. PUPILS ENROLLED	AV. DAILY ATTENDANCE	NO. TEACHERS MALE	NO. TEACHERS FEMALE	AV. NO. DAYS OF SCHOOL	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
N. Atl.	17,401	3,113	2,036	18.3	73.2	166.6	$48,006
S. Atl.	8,858	1,747	1,116	19.5	20.2	97.2	8,520
S. Cent.	10,973	2,307	1,471	28.5	21.0	88.1	10,797
N. Cent.	22,362	5,015	3,189	54.5	113.7	147.9	62,824
Western	3,028	516	333	4.7	10.3	135.1	10,130

recrudescence of the aristocratic idea of education, strengthened by the notion that mass education was a carpet-bag innovation. The average value of taxable property for each child in the South in the 1890's was from one-third to one-fourth of what it was in the North and West. This is explained not wholly by the poverty of the South but partly by the fact that there were more children of school age in proportion to the population in this section.

The popular reaction against the injustice and backwardness of the "Bourbon" regime—economic, social, political, and cultural—came as a mass movement from the farmers. Few movements in history have arisen as spontaneously as did that of the Farmers' Alliance. In numerous rural communities widely scattered over the South and West, Alliances, Unions, Wheels, and what-nots sprang up in the late seventies and early eighties and soon developed the zeal of a crusade. These organizations were integrated in the various states in the mid-eighties, and in 1887 those in the South formed the Farmers' Alliance and Coöperative Union * (the "Southern Alliance"), and those in the Northwest formed the National Farmers' Alliance (the "Northern Alliance"). The two were never completely merged but they came to act together in politics.

In seeking a way out of their Slough of Despond,

* The name was changed in 1889 to Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union, courting the support of industrial labor in politics.

Southern Alliancemen turned first to business coöperation. Local Alliances arranged for the coöperative purchase of supplies and in some cases for the sale of products for those of their members who could break away from the clutches of the lien system. Beginning in 1887 the scope of such enterprises was broadened by the establishment of state exchanges. These met with considerable success for a time. They seem to have saved the farmers who were able to avail themselves of their services from twenty-five to fifty per cent on the purchase of supplies and considerable sums on the sale of their products. Encouraged by the success of these ventures, coöperative stores, warehouses, and gins sprang up like mushrooms over the South.

And what was the reaction of the business world toward these intruders? Innuendo, ridicule, charges of dishonesty, dire prophecies of bankruptcy, price and rate discriminations on the part of wholesalers, manufacturers, railroads, and money lenders, as well as "cut throat" competition, were brought to bear against them. They were handicapped in such a struggle because of insufficient capital and credit backing. They did a much larger business than their modest capital warranted, so they found it necessary to borrow too heavily at high rates of interest. Besides, they overdid themselves in trying to save money for their members. In towns where coöperative stores were located, merchants ran "gigantic slaughter sales," in which the "slaughter" was aimed apparently at prices but actu-

ally at the "co-ops." The difference was that the slashing of prices was quite temporary while the destruction of the "co-ops" was permanent. Thus most of these ventures were short-lived, though several of the state exchanges and a few of the stores survived until the panic of 1893.

At best such enterprises were unable to give much assistance to the majority of the farmers who needed it most. The former could not afford to be generous with credit, and the latter could not generally pay cash. What was obviously needed, for one thing, was a system of rural credits. This in time the farmers came to realize.

In fact their experiences in the business world, along with the discussions at their meetings, finally convinced Alliancemen that some of their chief problems called for political action. But this was a delicate matter in the Solid South. Even if the Alliance should start a revolt *within* the Democratic party, this might lead to a split, to the formation of a third party, and hence to a situation in which the Negroes would hold the balance of power. When the movement for political action finally gained the ascendency in the South (1888–90), it seems to have come largely from the rank and file, for the outstanding leaders opposed it until opposition became obviously futile. Then they climbed on the band wagon. And so did the politicians.

In several states the Alliance made its demands upon candidates in 1888, and these demands were generally

accepted, as quite in keeping with "Jeffersonian Democracy." But somehow or other when the legislatures met, other influences prevailed. Railroad commissions lacked a few votes of being established; tax laws lacked a few votes of being changed; school appropriations were almost, but not quite, boosted.

The farmers had learned some things by 1890. That year, in many of the Southern states they sent actual "dirt farmers" to the legislature. The net results were not bad, though not altogether satisfying. Most of the results achieved by the Grange in the North and West in the seventies, such as the regulation of railroads and other public service corporations, were widely gained by the Alliance in the South in 1890–92. In some states, forward steps in education were taken. In North Carolina, for example, the State Normal and Industrial School (now the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina) was established; also the Agricultural and Technical School (for Negroes). The State College of Agriculture and Mechanics had been put on its feet a few years earlier, largely as a result of Alliance activity. In South Carolina Clemson College (of agriculture and mechanics) was established by the "farmers' legislature" of 1889. Other agricultural and normal schools arose in Southern states in response to Alliance demands.

Meanwhile, Alliancemen were coming to realize that their major problems were national. In 1889 the Northern and Southern Alliances had met in St. Louis, where they were joined by the Knights of

Labor, and had formulated a national program. This had called for monetary inflation, by means of the unlimited coinage of silver and the issuance of more greenbacks; government ownership of the means of transportation and communication; the reclamation of lands granted to railroads and other corporations in excess of their actual needs; and the prohibition of speculation in the prices of agricultural products. To these were later added demands for graduated income and inheritance taxes, popular election of United States Senators, postal savings banks, parcel post, and rural free delivery.

But the demand of the Southern Alliance which led to the greatest amount of controversy, even among members of the organization, was for a plan of rural credits known as the Sub-Treasury Plan. It provided that the federal government should establish warehouses, elevators, and the like in the various county seats, to which the farmers might bring non-perishable products, and with these as security obtain federal loans, up to eighty per cent of the market value of such products, at a low rate of interest. When the loan was repaid, the farmer or the man to whom he might have sold his certificate of deposit might reclaim the products.

This plan became a part of the "yard-stick" by which candidates for office were measured in 1890. Most of the old-line statesmen—the "Bourbons"—refused to accept it, as did many of the more conservative Alliancemen. It proved to be an entering wedge

for a split in the Alliance, and also in the Democratic party. By this time the movement had developed what seemed to be dangerously radical tendencies in the eyes of its more conservative leaders—large planters affected with business interests. It was frankly a struggle of the "wool-hat boys" to oust the "silk-hat bosses" from control of the Southern Democracy and to gain from the government a fair deal for "the toiling masses."

As interest centered more upon federal policies in 1891–92, the movement for a third party in the South grew rapidly. It was obvious that the "Bourbons" were wedded to the conservative Cleveland Democracy and that the Republican party, nationally, offered little or no hope to the radical agrarians. The People's Party had been launched in several of the Western states in 1890. The farmers of the West could not swing the Republican party, those of the South could not control the national Democracy ; and so it was urged that they get together in a party of their own and rescue the masses from the clutches of the Shylocks. Local, county, and state Alliances in the South endorsed the political rebellion, and by the summer of 1892 the organization as a whole was preponderantly rebel. The majority of its members went Populist with a zeal rarely known in political annals.

In the three-cornered contests that followed in most of the Southern states,* the Democracy lost its hold

* In South Carolina the radicals, under the leadership of Ben Tillman, so completely captured the state Democracy that no new

in a number of the rural counties but held on to the states and most of the Congressional districts, thanks to its control over the election machinery and its greater resourcefulness in gaining the support of "doubtful" voters. In the Georgia district in which Tom Watson was a Populist candidate for Congress in 1892, the city of Augusta had to be counted upon by the Democrats to offset the Populist majorities of the rural counties. It responded nobly—with a Democratic majority greatly in excess of the voting population. Gangs of Negroes were brought over from South Carolina and taken from one polling place to another. Negroes in general were accorded a prominence on election days such as they had not enjoyed since Reconstruction. But it was different. Those who could be induced to vote "right"—and many of them could—were more than welcome at the polls. They were encouraged to vote early and often. If, as in North Carolina, however, they were inclined to join the "wrong" crowd, it was even more like Reconstruction times.

The panic of 1893 and the extreme hard times that followed were favorable to the growth of the new party. Democratic leaders in the South became thoroughly alarmed as the Populist vote mounted in the by-elections of 1893. There might be a limit to manufactured majorities. In September, 1893, Gov-

party was formed. In North Carolina the Populists fused with the Republicans in 1894, captured the legislature and two years later the governorship. The record of the fusion regime, in the hands of hungry politicians, did little credit to the radical agrarians.

ernor Northen of Georgia—a planter-business-man-Allianceman who remained true to the old party—beseeched Cleveland to make some public statement favorable to the farmers' cause (to say something for silver); else the rising tide of Populism threatened to engulf the South and maroon the Democratic party. But Cleveland was adamant. He had little conception of the farmers' plight, and no sympathy for their program. So he gave cold comfort to the frightened "Bourbons." [22] This, together with further election reverses and continued hard times, convinced the Southern Democracy by 1895, that in self-defense it must break away from the leadership of Cleveland and the conservative Eastern wing of the party and join the Western agrarians on a Populistic platform.

Hence Bryan.

Southern conservatives hardly knew where they stood. They were tired of the domination of Big Business, distressed by the hard times, relieved at the prospect of banishing the Populist specter; but they were rather afraid of Bryan and his free-silver medicine. So most of them "voted for Bryan and prayed for McKinley." They were doubtless relieved when they learned of the triumph of the "full dinner pail."

But what has all this to do with the conflict between the Old South and the New? In so far as the Alliancemen and Populists had stood for agricultural as against industrial, commercial, and financial interests and for the old coalition of South and West in national politics, they may be said to have represented the Old

South group. And in this regard the triumph of business-man Republicanism in 1896 and again in 1900 convinced the South that the past would not come back. Why kick any longer against fate? The way of the future was the way of the North. If the great god of battles had not proved it sufficiently in the 1860's, the will of the nation had shown it in the 1890's.

But Alliancemen and Populists had also stood for sectional reconciliation, for democracy, and for public education. These principles were in line with the New South movement, and they were chief among those taken over from the rebel party by the regenerated Democracy in the years that followed. For a new type of leadership had arisen in the Democratic party in the South. Such men as Walter Hines Page, Charles D. McIver, Charles B. Aycock, Edwin A. Alderman, and a host of others were prophets of a new South that must be more than industrialized. It must be educated. Its state and local governments must become more socially minded. The South must remember at last "the forgotten man." In the next chapter we shall see how the dreams of these were realized, at least in part, by the educational renaissance of the early twentieth century.

The Spanish-American War, returning prosperity, and the rise of American imperialism further strengthened the New South group. The war greatly stimulated sectional reconciliation, and its imperialist consequences favored industrial and commercial expansion.

And so by 1900 the Old South was little more than

a memory. Most of those who had remembered, perhaps over-remembered, its "glories" had passed to the Glorious Beyond. Their places were being filled by modern "go-getters." Northern capital was responding to urgent invitations to exploit Southern resources, physical and human. Dependence upon Northern business connections was steadily growing. Imitation of Northern manners and customs had become the mode. The South had developed a veritable inferiority complex. It would now imitate the North. Even the best of its old life and traditions must now give place to relentless nationalization. If Toombs and Yancey had been supplanted by Grady and Aycock, Washington and Lee had given place to Babbitt.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SOUTH STRIVES TO FOLLOW THE NATIONAL PATTERN

THE CONQUEST OF THE SOUTH BY THE NORTH IN 1900 was more complete and more fundamental than in 1865. The war broke down physical resistance and brought outward changes in institutions, but it did not at the time break the spirit of the South, its reliance upon its own cultural standards and pride in its own way of life. By 1900, however, the South had become the willing and almost humble disciple of its one-time foe. Only a dwindling and impotent minority was left to question the dominant philosophy that the South's way out was to imitate the North. Its cities must be like Northern cities, its schools and colleges like Northern schools and colleges. Atlanta must be the New York of the South, Birmingham the Pittsburgh, Spartanburg the Lowell, High Point the Grand Rapids, and so on *ad infinitum*. Northern culture and cultural standards were accepted at their own valuation. No Southern scholar, statesman, poet, novelist, or playwright could hope for recognition in his own section until he had first been recognized in the North.

The South had no standards of its own, and only a puny, imitative culture.

The section was mainly absorbed in the work of enlarging its industries; developing its towns and cities; and reorganizing, consolidating, and extending its transportation systems. To speed up the process it strenuously sought after Northern capital, crassly advertising that Southern labor is the most docile in the world and the cheapest in the country: come down and exploit it!

The invitation brought generous response. There is no way to determine the exact amount or proportion of Northern capital that went into Southern industry, but there is ample evidence that it played a much larger part after 1900 than in previous years. It came to the aid of many small industries, locally owned, greatly expanded them, and generally gained dominance in the process. It was wholly or mainly instrumental in the rise of numerous new ones. The consolidation of railroads, once locally owned, by the magic wand of Northern "masters of capital" had begun somewhat earlier. The process had been speeded up by forced liquidations in the nineties and was brought to completion during the era of high finance in the reign of the first Roosevelt. In all this juggling of capital stock, real and nominal, control of Southern corporations yielded to the magnet of Wall Street. The main contribution of the South was cheap raw material and cheap labor. But it had the immense satisfaction of watching its quiet, leisurely towns grow

into bustling cities. Some old fogey may have dropped a tear because the grandeur that was Richmond or the glory that was New Orleans had been sold for Yankee dollars. But who would pay any attention to him! He was a back number. More factories meant more population, more population meant more business, more business meant more prosperity, and was not prosperity the *summum bonum!*

To illustrate the growth of manufacturing enterprises in the South from 1904 to 1929, Professor J. W. Martin, of the University of Kentucky, has compiled the following table, based upon a weighted combination of horse power, number of wage earners, and value added by manufacture (reduced by index numbers to the same price level):

PER CENT INCREASE OF MANUFACTURES IN SOUTHERN STATES, 1904–1929

Okl.	770.6	Fla.	254.9	Miss.	180.3
N. C.	405.3	Ala.	251.9	Ky.	165.5
Tex.	386.6	S. C.	246.5	Ark.	165.5
Tenn.	280.0	Ga.	228.9	All other states	240.0
Va.	257.8	La.	184.6		

The following figures from the U. S. Census, shown on page 145, tell the same story with different details.

Again the most conspicuous growth was in the cotton textile industry. The South's percentage of the country's spindles rose from twenty-three in 1899 to fifty-seven in 1929, and its percentage of the looms rose from twenty-four to fifty-four. So it took the

GROWTH OF MANUFACTURES IN SOUTHERN STATES, 1899–1929

STATE	NO. WAGE-EARNERS (THOUSANDS)		TOTAL WAGES (MILLIONS)		VALUE PRODUCTS (MILLIONS)	
	1899	1929	1899	1929	1899	1929
Ala.	53	120	15	102	81	560
Ark.	27	44	9	40	45	211
Fla.	34	65	11	55	37	232
Ga.	84	159	20	110	107	722
Ky.	63	78	22	89	154	503
La.	42	87	15	84	121	685
Miss.	26	52	7	42	40	221
N. C.	71	210	14	161	95	1312
S. C.	48	109	9	73	59	386
Tenn.	51	128	17	116	108	503
Tex.	48	134	21	152	21	1450
Va.	73	120	22	118	132	746

supremacy from New England. The leading states in the South in this industry were in order:—North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. In North Carolina, Kannapolis had come to boast the largest towel mills in the world, Durham the largest hosiery mills, Greensboro the largest denim mills, Winston-Salem the largest men's knit underwear mills in the country as well as the largest tobacco factories in the world.

In the tobacco industry North Carolina was turning out nearly half the nation's total, and the South as a whole about two-thirds. Alabama made further gains in the production of iron and steel. Louisiana held her lead in cane sugar, and also produced, cleaned, and

polished nearly half the rice, while Texas and Arkansas turned out about two-thirds of the remainder. Thanks mainly to North Carolina, the South had come to produce about thirteen per cent of the country's output of furniture. The timber industry (sawing and dressing of lumber) ranked second to the textile mills in the number of employees. The former employed about one-fifth of the wage-earners in the South in 1927, and the latter about one-third.

One of the many reasons for the rapid rise of industry in the South after 1900 was the fact that the section was especially endowed with water-power resources. In 1930 North Carolina ranked second to New York among the states east of the Mississippi, and third in the country, in the amount of developed water power. It was closely followed by Alabama. The eight states which had more than half-a-million developed horse power ranked in order as follows:—California, New York, North Carolina, Alabama, Washington, South Carolina, Maine, and Wisconsin.

DEVELOPED WATER POWER, 1930, BY SECTIONS

Pacific and Mountain states	4,550,000 horse power
New Eng. and Mid. Atl. states	3,756,000 " "
Southern states	3,485,000 " "

Most of this development in the South, except that which was carried on by the Dukes, was financed by, or brought under the control of, Northern capital.

Closely connected with the power industry were

the public utilities. In fact, with few exceptions, the latter had come to be owned by the former, either directly or through holding companies. Regulation in the public interest was almost non-existent. Regulatory laws had been passed and corporation commissions had been formed, but neither laws nor commissions had much weight against the flagrant violations of public interests for which power and public service companies are notorious.

Meanwhile the growth of urban population was one of the most notable phases of the South's development. While the section remained predominantly rural, the shift from country to town was very marked, as evidenced by the following:

PER CENT OF URBAN POPULATION, 1900 AND 1930
(In towns and cities having more than 2500 population)

States	1900	1930	States	1900	1930
Va.	18.3	32.4	Ala.	11.9	28.1
N. C.	9.6	25.5	Miss.	7.7	16.9
S. C.	12.8	21.3	Ark.	8.5	20.6
Ga.	15.6	30.8	La.	26.5	39.7
Fla.	20.3	51.7	Okl.	7.4	34.3
Ky.	21.8	30.6	Tex.	17.1	40.0
Tenn.	16.2	34.3			

These figures do not tell the whole story. Great numbers of unincorporated mill villages lie outside the corporate limits of the larger towns and cities. Numbers of Southern towns claim at least twice as many souls as the census gives them credit for.

Growth of Representative Southern Cities, 1900–1930
(Population in thousands)

City	1900	1930	City	1900	1930
Tulsa, Okl.	2	141	San Antonio, Tex.	53	232
Miami, Fla.	2	111	Charlotte, N. C.	18	83
Greensboro, N. C.	6	54	Atlanta, Ga.	90	270
Birmingham, Ala.	38	260	Chattanooga, Tenn.	30	120
El Paso, Tex.	16	102	Norfolk, Va.	47	130
Ft. Worth, Tex.	26	163	Knoxville, Tenn.	83	106
Dallas, Tex.	43	260	Columbia, S. C.	21	57
Jackson, Miss.	8	48	Memphis, Tenn.	102	253
Tampa, Fla.	16	101	Little Rock, Ark.	38	82
Winston-Salem, N. C.	14	75	New Orleans, La.	287	459
Jacksonville, Fla.	28	130	Louisville, Ky.	205	308

This growth of urban population and the consequent rise of the "go-getter," completed the social and cultural revolution which had been under way in the eighties and nineties. The polite society of the planters gave place to the high society of the newly rich. Cole Blease took Calhoun's seat in the Senate, and Tom Heflin represented the Cradle of the Confederacy. Ty Cobb, Charlie Chaplin, and Eddie Guest became popular idols. Mint juleps were supplanted by "hooch," and the Virginia reel by the fox trot. If King Cotton still reigned, his throne was in the mill and his council was the chamber of commerce.

Few of the newly rich who thus came to dominate Southern society were college bred. Some perhaps had taken campus courses, specializing in football and fraternities, but most of them had grown up during the cultural famine which followed the Civil War and Reconstruction. Some were city bred, but the majority seem to have come from the sturdy yeomanry. They

were bold, enterprising, and industrious men, gifted with a certain shrewdness and often were the beneficiaries of circumstances.

And so they made Main Street a little Broadway, Peachtree Road a Fifth Avenue, and Farmer Brown's pasture a Forest Hills. The frilly architecture of the Hayes-to-McKinley era was generally supplanted by modern adaptations of Tudor, Georgian, colonial, and Spanish, interspersed with hybrid and nondescript types. Some of the recent, restricted suburbs, however, are well planned and very attractive.

Of course there had to be slums in the cities. These were mainly but not wholly in the Negro sections, for considerable numbers of white families also lived in squalid and unsanitary surroundings. These sections were not so extensive or congested as in the larger cities of the North, thanks to lower ground rents and, so far as the whites were concerned at least, to the outlet afforded by the mill villages.

And what were the conditions in these? It appears from studies made by careful students in recent years that they were neither so bad in general as their worst critics have painted them, nor so good at best as their apologists have claimed. In outward appearance, physical comforts, or the lack of them ; and in recreational, educational, and general welfare conditions, they varied widely. A large proportion were unincorporated villages, rural and suburban. These were generally owned and controlled (directly or indirectly) in al-

most every phase of life by the mills. In some cases groups of villages had been incorporated together into mill towns. These were less fully, or less directly, under the control of the mill owners. Still others had in time been brought within the corporate limits of cities. It often happened that the owners had consented to the incorporation of their villages as suburbs only on condition that autonomy be left them in certain matters. Their schools, for example, were exempted from the control of city authorities and were left under local boards, subject only to routine supervision by county and state authorities.

In general the older villages, whether rural or suburban, were the more squalid and depressing. Rows of ugly, unkempt cottages, all exactly alike, squatted along the roads or streets near the plant, or were propped up by stilt-like pillars on gully-washed hillsides. In many villages of this type, there were few trees, no grassy lawns, and almost no flowers or shrubbery. There were usually few conveniences, often no sewage, and only the most primitive means of sanitation.

Many of the villages that arose from the boom times of the World War to the late twenties and a few of the earlier ones presented a very different picture. The cottages or bungalows were rather attractive in appearance and showed a variety of design. They were built in wooded regions or else trees had been cultivated around them, they had grassy lawns and

terraces as well as flowers and shrubbery, and were generally equipped with modern conveniences.

Both these types represent extremes. The former was more prevalent than the latter in Southern mill communities in general. Many fell somewhere between the two or showed combinations of the better and the worse in the same village. One of the queerest aspects of the whole situation was that many of the mill workers seemed to have little or no choice as among the various types of physical environments. In fact some of them actually seemed to prefer the shabbier settlements. Perhaps an ingrained sense of inferiority along with their conceptions of Christian humility may help to explain this.

Miserable shacks, attractive bungalows, or in-between housing was a part of the perquisites to workers in company-owned villages. Rents were distinctly below cost, generally about four or five dollars per month—about a dollar for each room. Besides, electricity, water, and upkeep of houses and lawns (if any) were generally furnished without extra charge. Playgrounds, Y.M.C.A.'s, Y.W.C.A.'s, community centers, welfare work, and the like were often furnished wholly or mainly by the companies. Churches, too, received generous support from owners and managers. Sunday School classes were taught in many cases by superintendents and foremen. In the unincorporated villages the majesty of the law was the company-paid deputy. To what extent the management controlled these functions is impossible to say with

certainty, but such functionaries were universally in accord with the viewpoint of the owners. The teachers, like the preachers and the rest, were not told specifically what they were to teach or to preach. They did not have to be.

Set over against these perquisites were the lower wage levels and the longer working hours which prevailed in the South. Money wages were about one-third lower and working hours about one-fourth longer in Southern mills than in those of New England. To what extent were these differentials offset by the perquisites and by differences in the cost of living? Studies have been made in this field representing various viewpoints. Taken collectively and with due allowances for bias either way, they seem to indicate that labor costs in the South were distinctly lower, and that this was the main reason for the migration of the mills. From the standpoint of the worker, it seems to have been less a matter of lower living costs than of lower living standards.

But the question of *control* over the workers may have been even more important than that of wage differentials. The reason for the rise of the paternalistic system was suggested in the preceding chapter. The system seems to have had no insidious motives in its origin and, so far as some owners were concerned, it may have developed none—at least consciously. It still had the appearances of being well meant. "These people are like children," said one of the better type of owners; "we have to take care of them." [23] It was

often pointed out that in communities in which the upkeep of yards was left wholly to the workers, and community activities largely so, much poorer results obtained. It was therefore assumed that the company did better to do such things itself and take it out of the pay envelope. Whether it was better or not can not be assumed categorically. It may have been that the dependence to which these people and their ancestors had been subjected for generations, whether as indentured servants, tenant farmers, or mill workers, had stamped their character. Some may argue that under a plan of employee participation in management and profits they might have developed a greater degree of initiative and personality. As it was, with extremely rare exceptions, they were notably lacking in such qualities. Their kith and kin from the same rural sections, upon removing to the cities, became mechanics, merchants, lawyers, teachers, or perhaps fell into the criminal class. But the mills tended to grind out a uniform product. The workers and their children's children remained in the mills. Few of them ever rose above the elementary grades in school. Usually they went to work as soon as the law allowed, and there they stayed—culturally retarded and socially isolated. They were not only barred in the main from social contacts with the townspeople, but were generally looked down upon by the poorest classes in the rural districts from which they had come.

And what was their reaction toward this circumscribed life? In general they evinced a spirit of passive

resignation. A feeling of inferiority and hopelessness was widespread. Resentment was not unknown, but it was much more frequently directed toward some unpopular boss than toward the system in general.

The strikes of the late twenties and early thirties seemed to indicate that something was happening in Southern mill communities. The fact that several were spontaneous and represented no established unions or outside influences may have been significant. The surprisingly ready response in some localities to communist agitation was more a tribute to the plausibility and glibness of tongue of the professional "red" than a reasoned conviction of the verity of the doctrine. Such conversions as took place, therefore, were generally superficial and ephemeral. Even this kind of response, however, may have indicated that traditional attitudes were breaking down and that the "docility of Southern labor" was destined to join the category of fraudulent patent medicine advertisements.

On the other hand, the experiences of these strikes showed the enormous odds against Southern mill labor in a conflict with capital. The press was almost unanimously hostile to labor, and public opinion was generally so. The superior power of capital over the agencies of law and order, its power of eviction from company-owned houses, plus the lack of resources and native leadership among workers made for heavy odds against labor. The strikes of 1934 were regarded by governmental authorities in some States, notably in

Georgia, as identical with insurrection and were so treated by the militia.

When times were better on the farms, the mill workers had a possible outlet there. This may have helped to explain their improved conditions in days of general prosperity. But the days of general prosperity were numbered. Even in the mid-twenties when the mills were still showing handsome though not war-time profits many farmers were in the red. Good times for them had come and gone.

From the turn of the century to the outbreak of the World War, Southern agriculture underwent a gradual but rather steady improvement. The crop-lien system relaxed but did not loose its hold. The difference between cash and credit prices narrowed somewhat and the proportion of victims declined. The growth of tenant farming showed some let-up, and wages on the farm, like those in the mill, went up almost as much as prices. But not quite. So the proprietor farmer, like the proprietor of the mill, was the chief gainer.

Then came the war. Its effects upon agriculture, like those upon business in general, were at first disconcerting, not to say disastrous. The bottom fell out of the markets. For a season cotton was dependent on charity or public spirit for a market. Throughout the cotton belt and even beyond it went up the cry, "Buy a bale at ten cents!" Those who responded, whether from generous or from speculative motives, were richly rewarded if they held it for two or three years.

For up it went—to twenty, thirty, even forty cents a pound. Other farm products went up almost if not quite in proportion. From 1917 to 1920 they soared above the general price curve.

Those were the good times for the farmer, good times that he may never see again, times when Fords could not be made fast enough, when Buicks and even Cadillacs rolled into the old buggy house. Delco lights and water works were installed on many a farm. Inflation ran away with farm values. Money was borrowed, lands were bought, and improvements were made on this basis, and taxes were fixed accordingly. The farmer was riding for a fall—a fall that would bear marked resemblance to that of the Farmers' Alliance-Populist era. Also marked differences. He fell from a greater height this time and was cumbered with heavier obligations.

He not only fell more precipitately in 1921 than in the 1890's but fell to a deeper abyss and was left more hopelessly down than any other contemporary producer. The prices of his products tumbled almost twice as much in proportion as those of the things which he had to buy, and they stayed out of line thereafter. On a basis of the averages for 1910–1914, the general price curve for commodities fell from 205 in 1919 to 155 in 1921 and varied but little from then until 1929. Meanwhile the curve for farm products fell from 209 to 116. The disparity lessened somewhat in the mid-twenties but was not overcome. Debts contracted when cotton and tobacco were forty cents a

pound were not easy to pay when they fell to twenty and ten and below. Yet the prices of smoking tobacco, cigarettes, and the like remained about the same.

The following tables illustrate these vicissitudes of the farmer:

GROSS VALUE OF ALL FARM PRODUCTS
(in millions of dollars)

State	1899	1909	1919	1929
Va.	87	151	425	157
N. C.	89	176	614	253
S. C.	68	156	490	139
Ga.	104	257	638	232
Fla.	18	44	101	90
Ky.	123	218	512	175
Tenn.	106	193	492	188
Ala.	91	171	383	207
Miss.	102	173	407	271
Ark.	80	154	424	210
La.	73	90	238	150
Okl.	45	215	708	246
Tex.	240	430	1369	616

Value of All Farm Land
(in millions of dollars)

State	1900	1910	1920	1930
Va.	201	395	756	534
N. C.	142	343	858	574
S. C.	100	269	647	260
Ga.	139	370	897	395
Fla.	31	94	228	353
Ky.	291	484	1051	595
Tenn.	202	371	808	516
Ala.	100	217	416	354
Miss.	115	254	642	411
Ark.	105	246	608	408
La.	108	188	384	314
Okl.	149	649	1171	1031
Tex.	592	1633	3245	3063

Per Cent of Farms Operated by Tenants

State	1900	1910	1920	1930
Va.	30.7	26.5	25.6	28.1
N. C.	41.4	42.3	43.5	49.2
S. C.	61.1	63.0	64.5	65.1
Ga.	59.9	65.6	66.6	68.2
Fla.	26.5	26.7	25.3	28.4
Ky.	32.8	33.9	33.4	35.9
Tenn.	40.6	41.1	41.1	46.2
Okl.	57.7	60.2	57.9	64.7
Miss.	62.4	66.1	66.1	72.2
Ark.	45.4	50.0	51.3	63.0
La.	58.0	55.3	57.1	66.6
Okl.	43.8	54.8	51.0	61.5
Tex.	49.7	53.6	53.3	60.9

Thus the farmers of the South were faced with a situation not unlike that of the eighties and nineties, yet they were not inspired as their fathers had been to effective coöperation or political revolt. Some groups did form coöperative organizations for buying and selling, but they failed in most cases to enlist the support of a sufficient proportion of producers or purchasers. This fact, together with bad management in some cases, an exaggerated spirit of individualism, the hostility of middlemen, and the problem of securing adequate credit, reacted against such enterprises. The number of Southern farms reporting sale of products through co-ops in 1920 was 38,000; by 1925 it rose to 250,000; but by 1930 it fell back to 91,000. The number that reported purchases in the same way in 1920 was 27,000 ; it rose to 60,000 in 1925, and declined to 50,000 in 1930. Southern farmers were still too individualistic to coöperate effectively, even in the face of their distressful plight in the twenties. So agriculture remained relatively unprofitable through the boom times for industry, trade, and finance—unprofitable for proprietors as well as tenants, white as well as black.

The Fordney-McCumber Tariff (of 1922), though a temporary and short-sighted advantage to industrial groups, was a heavy blow to agricultural interests and was ultimately a contributory cause of the crash of 1929. It helped to maintain the disparity of prices between the products of farm and factory, and thus held down the purchasing power of farmers. Besides, in

curtailing our foreign trade, it further dammed up the agricultural surplus. The consequences were only deferred for industrial and commercial groups by the wholesale flotation of foreign loans, which were generally passed on to dependent small banks and to the investing public. Before the limit of these schemes had been reached, retaliatory tariffs and quotas had set in. On the principle that the hair of the dog is good for the bite, the Smoot-Hawley act of 1930 raised tariff walls still higher and all but stopped what was left of our foreign trade.

Such policies were more disastrous to the South than to any other region. Its staples, especially cotton and to a large extent tobacco, were produced for a world market. Hemmed in by economic nationalism to a domestic market, the section seemed to be doomed. Against such trends, the Hoover administration sought to help distressed agriculture by having government agencies purchase a portion of the surplus. This plan, as might have been expected, was utterly inadequate and tended only to complicate the trouble. Mr. Coolidge as President, Mr. Mellon as Secretary of the Treasury, and Mr. Hoover as Secretary of Commerce, all very sensitive to the wishes of industrialists and financiers, seemed to believe that goods could continually flow in one direction. Keep on sending them abroad on a basis of loans. But how were these loans to be repaid? Not with gold, for our customers were embarrassingly short of gold while we had an equally embarrassing surplus. The World War had converted

this country from a debtor to the greatest creditor nation. Time had been when we could welcome a surplus of exports for the payment of foreign obligations and services, but that time was past. We could no longer sell on credit unless we were willing to take goods in return, or else to follow, as we did, the short-sighted policy of taking IOU's which would ultimately leave their holders in the lurch. The Coolidge-Mellon-Hoover group seem to have pinned their faith to some mystical workings of triangulation. It was true that we needed to buy many products—such as tea, coffee, silk, rubber, tin and manganese—which we either produced not at all or in insufficient quantities to meet our needs. These would come not directly from Europe in most cases nor altogether from regions under European control, but in any case, by triangular arrangements, they would offset in some measure our excess of exports. But such commodities had figured in our pre-war trade, and while we would doubtless increase our demands for them somewhat, the increase would be a mere bagatelle compared with the excess of our exports in the loan-inflated era of the twenties. It is not surprising, therefore, that this era reached the end of its tether.

Roosevelt councils were torn for a time between nationalist and internationalist policies, but the former soon triumphed. Domestic markets were to be of first concern. Maybe in time we could strike good old Yankee bargains with foreigners. In the meantime an economy of scarcity would boost prices at home and

a devalued dollar would tend to offset the differential abroad. On the whole the policy was helpful in its immediate effects upon producers of the major staples, but it left their long-time problems unsolved. The growth of cotton culture abroad along with the general tendency toward national self-sufficiency made the problem of the Southern farmer increasingly grave. The New Deal's expedients of processing taxes, reduced acreage with benefit payments, and generous loans on money crops served to boost domestic prices but failed to provide an effective outlet for a chronic surplus.

The distress of Southern agriculture was partly responsible for the increased urban and Northern drift of the Negro population. The urban drift within the South had been in progress since the rise of industry in the section. In fact down to 1920 the increase of Negro population in Southern cities had been greater than in Northern. Prior to 1916 Negro migration to the North had been only a small stream of about 10,000 a year on an average. In the latter year it became an exodus on a large scale, which in the course of eight years carried about a million Negroes northward, mostly to the metropolitan centers, thus doubling the Negro population of that section. The reasons for this migration were economic and sentimental. ? The economic causes were largely the same as those which had produced the cityward movement within the South, plus the higher wage levels in the North.

The sentimental reasons were the belief that the white North was more friendly toward and more considerate of the Negro than the white South, and that he would suffer less social and political discrimination in the North. From the standpoint of Northern industry, fresh labor supplies were needed because of the great expansion of industry and the falling off of foreign immigration. On the other hand, the Southern farmer after the collapse of 1920–21 found it necessary to limit the number of Negroes that he would agree to supply. A similar curtailment had been necessitated because of the spread of the boll weevil into the eastern cotton belt.

In spite of the cityward and Northward drift, the majority of the Negroes remained on Southern farms, mostly as tenants and wage hands. During the first decade of the century, however, the number of farms owned by Negroes in the South increased from 157,078 to 218,476, though the number and per cent of those operated by white owners declined. There was a small decline for each race in the next decade and a much larger one in the twenties. Probably the more enterprising Negroes—the kind who had formerly sought farm ownership—were going to the cities.

In the meantime Negroes had been employed in increasing numbers in Southern industries and trades, mostly in unskilled or semi-skilled positions. In many of their old trades they had been displaced by machinery; in others, such as those of barbers, locomotive firemen, and restaurant waiters they had been largely

supplanted by whites. On the other hand, they had gained considerable ground as brick and stone masons, plasterers, painters, mechanics, and bootleggers. Prosperity in the towns had produced more jobs as domestic servants. Then too, increasing numbers of Negroes had become small tradesmen, and some had entered the professions of medicine, dentistry, etc., serving a clientele of their own race. With the rise of jazz some became musical performers, and a few became actors.

The crime rate remained much higher among Negroes than among whites. A part of this difference may be attributed to the greater willingness of officers and courts to suspect, arrest, and convict the former than the latter. But it can not be blamed upon the greater prejudice against the Negro in the South, for there have been from three to four times as many arrests and convictions of Negroes in proportion to their numbers in the North and West as in the South. Other explanations offered are that the Negro is childish in his attitudes and moral concepts, weak in inhibitions, lacking in foresight, and heavily handicapped by his home and community environment. The relative weight of heredity and environment in this matter must be left to the psychologists and anthropologists. The unfairness of the courts toward the Negro can easily be exaggerated by judging from a few spectacular cases in which the emotional element was abnormally stimulated. On the whole, it may well be questioned whether there has been appreciably greater

unfairness toward him than toward the white man of equivalent economic status.

In spite of occasional evidences to the contrary, such as recurrent lynchings, within or without the pale of the law, marked progress has been made toward saner and more wholesome relations between the races since 1900. The number of lynchings has shown a notable decline, as the following table testifies:

NUMBER OF PERSONS LYNCHED IN THE UNITED STATES

Year	White	Negro	Year	White	Negro	Year	White	Negro
1901	27	108	1912	3	61	1923	2	26
1902	10	84	1913	1	47	1924	0	16
1903	17	87	1914	5	49	1925	0	18
1904	7	79	1915	13	53	1926	6	28
1905	5	60	1916	7	51	1927	3	18
1906	4	64	1917	2	48	1928	1	8
1907	3	59	1918	4	63	1929	3	7
1908	8	92	1919	6	77	1930	1	20
1909	14	75	1920	8	57	1931	1	12
1910	10	80	1921	7	57	1932	2	6
1911	8	63	1922	5	56	1933	4	24

About nine-tenths of the lynchings in the United States during the past forty-odd years were in the South, but during the greater part of that period more than nine-tenths of the Negroes were in the South. Not all the victims were Negroes, of course, and there is no doubt that the South has sinned more grievously in this matter than the rest of the country, particularly New England; but at least in recent years the Middle

West has lynched fully as many Negroes in proportion to their numbers in the population as the South. This seems to indicate that the problem is not merely a matter of the psychology of the Southern whites.

The states which have shown the worst records in this regard are, in order :—Georgia, Mississippi, Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, Arkansas, and Florida. The fewest lynchings in states having large Negro populations were Virginia and North Carolina. Both these states have had numbers of "lynchless" years during the past two decades.*

Most Southern whites have remained quite insistent that the Negro "know his place and stay in it." So long as he has done this he has often (perhaps generally) found more genuine sympathy, understanding, and personal concern among the white people in the South than in the North. This is the testimony of many Negroes who have gone North and returned South. It may need to be discounted somewhat by the well known tendency of their race toward flattery.

Increasing numbers of Negroes, however, have come to resent the condescending attitude of the whites, be it ever so kindly, and to demand equality of opportunity. Even in this direction progress has been made. The development of more wholesome, cordial, and mutually considerate relationships between the races has been furthered by such organiza-

* Murder was the cause of one-third of the lynchings of Negroes, rape of one-fifth, attacks and "crimes against persons" of one-fifth; the others are classed as "miscellaneous" and "crimes against property."

tions as the Commission on Interracial Coöperation, the Commission on Church and Race Relations of the Federal Council of Churches, and the social science departments in colleges and universities. Interracial gatherings of Southern college students, local, state, and regional, have shown a spirit of cordiality and broadminded coöperation which would not have been dreamed of in earlier years.

Aside from some conflicts within the Republican party organization, the Negro has played practically no active part in the political life of the South since 1900. Around that year the Southern states passed laws which eliminated by indirection the bulk of the Negro vote. The reason or excuse for such laws was that the Negro vote was notoriously corruptible and that experiences of the 1890's had taught the South that the white vote could not divide without giving the Negro a dangerous balance of power.

But the white vote did not again divide—except in the "white primaries" of the Democratic party; that is, it did not divide effectively—until 1928. Prior to that time no state of the one-time Confederacy except Tennessee had strayed from the fold in a Presidential campaign since the end of the Reconstruction era. In 1928, Virginia, North Carolina, Florida, and Texas cast their vote for Hoover. The reasons for this one-time breaking of the Solid South (for all rushed back into the fold in the next election) may be stated in ascending order as follows: satisfaction (at least in the

(1) cities) with "Coolidge prosperity," opposition to the anti-prohibition attitude of the Democratic candidate, and the fact that he was a member of the Roman Catholic Church. Otherwise, politics in the states of the former Confederacy had remained a struggle between factions of the Democratic party. These were usually built around personalities, and rarely represented any fundamental difference as to liberal or conservative policies. For conservatism in the main held sway. Whatever issues (if any) and whichever faction won the primary (hence the election), the victors could normally be counted upon as friendly toward business, hence orthodox in economics and government, not to say religion. The chances were that the candidates were business men themselves, or else lawyers closely connected with business interests. A study of the personnel of Southern legislatures made in 1933 by Dr. W. C. Jackson showed that these groups were still overwhelmingly preponderant. Political machines, based on courthouse rings, were usually as effective after the rise of the statewide primary as when the slate was fixed in so-called mass meetings or conventions. In fact, the machine still fixed the slate as a rule.

As a rule, but not always. The leaven of Populism showed recurrent vitality in such matters as revisions of railway rates and practises in 1905–1907, in more generous support of public schools, and in some revisions of the tax system. By 1930 six Southern states had adopted the income tax—Virginia, North Caro-

lina, South Carolina, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Oklahoma. All except Florida and Alabama had adopted the inheritance tax. In the main the Southern states were inclined to lean heavily upon taxes that could be widely dispersed, such as those upon tangible property and retail sales.

If the Negro had ceased to play an active part in Southern politics, he had often been the victim of a passive rôle thrust upon him. "Cussin' the nigger" was the main stock in trade of such demagogues as Heflin, Blease, Bilbo, and Jeff Davis. The ignominious resurgence of Ku Kluckery from 1915 to the mid-twenties greatly accentuated the political possibilities of such claptrap. The whys and wherefores of this movement have been variously explained. Perhaps the popularity of Thomas Dixon's novels, *The Leopard's Spots* and *The Clansman*, with their glorification of the original Klan, and the even greater popularity of the picture play based upon them, *The Birth of a Nation*, suggested to one William J. Simmons (evangelist and traveling salesman) the commercial possibilities of such an organization at ten dollars per member. Perhaps the race riots of then recent memory; the excitement of the European War, which at the time the Klan was started had given Americans no emotional outlet; the human allurements of secrecy and regalia; together with the outlet offered for the omnipresent inferiority complex–all help to explain the widespread response. The immense growth of the order in the years that followed the war may have been due in

large measure to the restiveness of the Negroes, made more sophisticated by their wartime experiences, and to the brutalizing effects of the war itself. Whatever the causes, the Klan spread over the country with hurricane speed and fury.

To Negro baiting it added the tremendous emotional force of religious prejudice—mainly against Jews and Catholics. The emphasis varied in different regions according to the relative strength of local prejudices. In the South, Jews were not very numerous, and despite the misconceptions to which the Frank case gave rise, prejudice against them was much less strong than in Northern cities. Outside of southern Louisiana, southeastern Texas, and northern Kentucky, Catholics were relatively few, and though prejudice against their church was powerful, it was directed against the church as an organization rather than the membership. Hence in this section the Klan found its chief emotional outlet in abusing the Negro and those whites who dared advocate justice to him.

But the Klansmen overplayed their hand. By the late twenties their hoodlum excesses had become so disgusting that sentiment turned against them. One by one, leading Ku Klux demagogues were retired to private life, and the organization ceased to reward its promoters sufficiently to maintain their zeal.

Meanwhile other crusades had arisen. Prohibition, which had antedated the revival of the Klan, had become a cardinal point in the political faith of most Southerners; or at least the Anti-Saloon League, the

W.C.T.U., and the temperance societies of the various churches had persuaded the politicians that it was. The effect was the same. However wet a candidate may have been in his drinking, he did not dare desert the cause of statutory dryness in politics. But the prohibitionists, like the Klansmen, and the anti-Catholics of 1928, were more zealous than discreet. And their excessive zeal became a boomerang. The reaction against the Noble Experiment was accentuated by the disappointment with the Engineer in the White House. Thus by 1933 regions which a few years before were thought to be unalterably arid politically were legalizing beer and voting to repeal the Eighteenth Amendment.

More or less associated with Kluckery and the bone-dry offensive, though not quite identical in leadership or following, was the crusade in defense of the infallibility and literal inspiration of the Bible against the onslaughts of modern science, and to rescue the good name of mankind from the scandal of a monkey ancestry. This was more distinctly but not wholly Southern. As we have said, the South had been in general more sensitive to religious than to economic heresy; at least the majority of its crusaders had been. The struggle between science and the old theology was fought and won by science in Europe and in the North during the great cultural famine in the South of the late nineteenth century. It did not reach its height in the latter section until the nineteen-twenties. Few Southerners had had any direct contact with eco-

nomic radicalism. Most of them had been brought up in conservative homes and communities and attended schools in which such doctrines were scarcely mentioned. When communism suddenly showed its head among the strikers of Gastonia, it was more widely decried for its atheism, its race-equality and alleged free-love heresies than for its economic doctrines. It was thus more easily damned in the public mind—or heart.

The South was not unaffected by the red hysteria that so agitated the North in the years that followed the Russian Revolution. In a way it may be said that the Fundamentalist craze was the Southern counterpart of the Northern red-hunt. While Northern and Western states were outlawing "criminal syndicalism," jailing or executing Mooney, Billings, Sacco, Vanzetti, and the rest; while many of their colleges and universities were ousting teachers because of their economic and political heresies, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Arkansas were forbidding the teaching of evolution in tax-supported schools, and various Southern colleges were firing teachers whose science and philosophy were not based upon the Scriptural account of creation. If Southern reactionaries were more successful in passing "monkey laws," Northerners were more active in discharging professors because of their opinions. According to the American Civil Liberties Union, as quoted by Virginius Dabney in *Liberalism in the South*, the seven colleges and universities regarded as the worst offenders in this matter during the

twenties were all in the North and West, and so were the eight most flagrant cases of dismissal. However the South had far from a clear record.

The fact that the South had been less perturbed about economic radicalism does not imply that she had been any more tolerant of it. She had simply been less aware of its existence. Conservatism was regnant in Dixie : Why rouse the masses to a menace so remote? The chief exceptions to this came from industrial capitalists and those of the newspapers which were their mouthpiece. They were especially alarmed by the liberal teachings in the social science departments of some of the universities. Teachings that were quite in accord with the ascertained facts and with the viewpoints accepted generally in such departments were often branded as "Bolshevik." Efforts to study mill conditions and problems first hand sometimes met with the warning, "You stick to your books and we'll stick to our knitting."

To what extent were such reactionary attitudes and excessive zeal inspired or encouraged by the churches? This is a highly controversial subject and difficult to treat with both candor and fairness. There is no doubt, however, that the South had an unfortunately large proportion of ministers whose education was extremely circumscribed and whose prejudices were profound. Some of these were like the Fundamentalist member of the Georgia Legislature, quoted by Dabney, who declared that the only books worth reading are the Bible, the hymnal, and the almanac.

"These are enough for any one," he said. "Read the Bible. It teaches you how to act. Read the hymn-book. It contains the finest poetry ever written. Read the almanac. It shows you how to figure out what the weather will be. There isn't another book that is necessary for any one to read, and therefore I am opposed to all libraries." [24]

This, of course, represents an extreme type, but one that was all too prevalent in rural districts and in some of the poorer sections of cities. Many itinerant evangelists combined such ignorance with a remarkable power to draw large audiences and to rouse them to formidable emotional fervor. Their theology was crudely medieval, their religion quite untempered by the "social gospel." Most of the ministers who had attended colleges and seminaries had been carefully shielded from unorthodox viewpoints, social as well as theological. Many of them, if not quite Fundamentalist, were highly conservative. On the other hand, there was a relatively small but growing element of liberals in almost all denominations who were striving, usually tactfully but often fearlessly, to broaden the religious and social outlook of their congregations. If they found it necessary to move rather often, they usually left behind them a hopeful nucleus of liberalized thought.

On the question of public education, the New South had been converted to the Northern way. Hence tax-supported schools for all were no longer

carpetbag heresies. In fact, public welfare work in general became orthodox. Even compulsory education, partial elimination of child labor, and other (mild) social legislation gradually found places in statute law.

Mention was made in Chapter III of the educational renaissance in the South which had its beginning toward the close of the nineteenth century. The way had been prepared for it by George Peabody and other philanthropists together with the more liberal elements among the prophets of the New South. It was inspired directly by such men as Walter Hines Page, Charles B. Aycock, Edwin A. Alderman, J. L. M. Curry, and C. W. Dabney and was encouraged by the Farmers' Alliance and the People's Party. Beginning about the turn of the century it received invaluable assistance from the Southern Education Board and the General Education Board. These organizations were the outgrowth of a series of conferences, beginning at Capon Springs, West Virginia, in 1898, which became the Conference for Education in the South. Such steps were furthered by leading friends of education, North and South. So influential was Robert C. Ogden, of New York, that the movement has often been called the Ogden movement. In 1901 the Southern Education Board was established, and the following year the General Education Board. Large funds were placed at their disposal by John D. Rockefeller and other philanthropists. These, like the Peabody fund, have been

administered with the view of stimulating communities and institutions to self-help.

The progress which was made in education between 1900 and 1930 was the most hopeful side of Southern life. The following tables give impressive evidence of this progress:

State	Ratio of no. children in public schools to pop'n 5-17 yrs. old				Average number of days schools were in session			
	1900	1910	1920	1928	1900	1910	1920	1928
Ala.	.62	.63	.74	.74	78	117	123	148
Ark.	.71	.80	.86	.77	78	107	126	146
Fla.	.67	.68	.83	1.12	93	106	133	154
Ga.	.65	.67	.74	.69	112	144	145	148
Ky.	.75	.74	.76	.80	118	125	123	164
La.	.44	.51	.64	.70	120	136	149	153
Miss.	.73	.80	.70	.87	101	123	122	139
N. C.	.64	.74	.82	.89	71	102	134	149
Okl.	.80	.83	.93	.91	95	140	166	149
S. C.	.61	.67	.84	.76	88	105	110	146
Tenn.	.75	.80	.88	.90	96	130	134	164
Tex.	.65	.67	.73	.78	108	131	156	153
Va.	.63	.64	.73	.74	120	140	147	165
South*	.65	.69	.79	.81	100	123	140	155
U. S.	.72	.73	.78	.82	144	158	162	172

* Average for states included in table.

State	Value of all public school property (in millions of dollars)		Current expenses of public schools (in millions of dollars)	
	1900	1928	1900	1928
Ala.	2.2	46.5	1.1	20.1
Ark.	2.9	31.7	1.6	14.1
Fla.	1.1	75.1	.8	30.5
Ga.	3.0	48.7	2.1	17.7
Ky.	5.8	52.0	2.9	22.5
La.	2.5	59.0	1.2	21.6
Miss.	1.8	40.0	1.5	18.2
N. C.	1.5	100.9	1.3	39.0
Okl.	1.6	80.9	1.1	29.3
S. C.	1.0	39.3	1.0	15.8
Tenn.	3.7	31.4	1.8	22.8
Tex.	9.3	179.2	5.2	65.9
Va.	3.6	61.9	2.0	22.3
South	40.0	846.6	23.6	339.8

STUDENTS IN SOUTHERN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, 1900 AND 1928

(Exclusive of those in preparatory departments)

State	Number students in publicly supported colleges and universities				Number students in privately supported colleges and universities			
	MEN		WOMEN		MEN		WOMEN	
	1900	1928	1900	1928	1900	1928	1900	1928
Ala.	482	3764	40	1487	480	1605	646	2053
Ark.	190	1515	46	689	305	1204	403	1571
Fla.	77	2004	40	1447	76	880	37	1079
Ga.	728	3881	22	1678	694	3991	1660	3737
Ky.	332	2746	64	1439	677	2574	1045	2018
La.	258	2180	0	2016	661	3245	453	2167
Miss.	542	2479	29	1689	342	1115	1307	2131
N. C.	793	4350	17	1858	1089	4599	1076	4895
Okl.	164	5696	77	4102	0	1358	0	2211
S. C.	802	3265	12	2589	606	1697	1250	3185
Tenn.	304	2279	79	1289	1516	5499	1921	4850
Tex.	903	9389	262	6768	802	8852	682	11,666
Va.	1164	5257	0	986	915	3716	1073	4227
South	6739	49,105	688	27,928	8163	40,335	11,553	35,791

South, grand total for 1900—27,143; for 1928—153,159

It may be noticed from the above tables that the proportion of Southern children in school rose to within one per cent of the national average; that the length of the school term increased 55 per cent, though it still fell short by 10 per cent of the average for the country. The value of school property in-

creased seventeen fold, and expenditures on public schools increased eleven fold. The number of college and university students in the South increased nearly six fold.

But this did not mean that the South had almost caught up with the rest of the country educationally. Her school equipment was less than half as valuable in proportion, her teachers' salaries were only 58 per cent as high as in the country as a whole, her proportion of high school students was low, and her libraries (school, college, and public) had about one-fifth the circulation of those elsewhere.

It should be remembered, however, that the South was still relatively poor. If her expenditures for education were comparatively low per capita, they were high in proportion to wealth and income. Besides, largely because of the exodus of young people in quest of better opportunities, the South continued to have a larger proportion of children of school age and a smaller proportion of men in the productive years of middle life. She was further handicapped by the necessity of maintaining two separate educational systems, and by the greater sparcity of population.

Any comparison of Southern schools and colleges with those of the North suffers because of the lower standards of colored institutions. The physical equipment of the latter was in general much poorer, teaching staffs were less well trained and well paid, and the results were naturally less satisfactory. Fully as high a proportion of Negro children as of white enter the

first grade, but the former drop out in much larger proportions in subsequent grades or else fail to advance, as illustrated in the following table:

PERCENTAGES OF WHITE AND COLORED PUPILS IN THE VARIOUS GRADES, 1927–28

(In the sixteen states having the largest Negro populations)

Grade	White	Negro	Grade	White	Negro
First	19.7	34.9	Seventh	8.0	4.2
Second	11.7	14.9	Eighth	3.7	1.5
Third	11.3	13.2	First, h. s.	5.6	1.7
Fourth	11.0	11.7	Second, h. s.	3.9	1.0
Fifth	10.2	9.1	Third, h. s.	2.9	.6
Sixth	9.1	6.5	Fourth, h. s.	2.2	.4

What effect did this democratization of educational opportunities have upon Southern civilization? Despite all their imperfections and shortcomings the schools may well be regarded as the greatest contribution of the New South movement to the social and cultural life of the Southern people as a whole. Though they made for standardization and did not as a rule stimulate independent or creative thought, they distinctly raised the general cultural level. Was the leveling-up process also a leveling-down? Did the schools facilitate the triumph of mediocrity over aristocratic culture? How much truth is there in Mencken's indictment as recorded in 1920 in "The Sahara

of the Bozart"? He assumed that the New South was a cultural desert, ruled by "poor white" yokels, upstart Babbitts, demagogue politicians, and intolerant preachers. In this desert was nowhere to be found a picture gallery worth visiting; an orchestra worth hearing; a poet or prose writer (save only Cabell) worth reading after; or anything above a fourth class composer, painter, sculptor, architect, historian, sociologist, scientist, philosopher, or theologian. The remnants of the old aristocracy left alive after the Civil War had been subdued by the triumphant Babbittry and yokelry, or else had fled the desert to enrich the culture of the North.

This, of course, is not a photographic likeness of the Southern scene: it is Mencken—hence somewhere between a caricature and a true picture. That the South of 1920 was predominantly superficial, crude, and largely lacking in creative culture can scarcely be questioned. It had become a tributary province; and as generally happens when a "backward" region seeks to imitate the civilization of a more "advanced" one, it was more apt in taking over the crudities and superficialities than the subtler and profounder qualities. Not that such virtues were superabundant in the North, nor that indigenous frailties were lacking in the South. If Babbittry was imported, yokelry did not have to be. Perhaps the combination produced a more dismal scene than that of the North at its best, but little worse than appeared in wide stretches of non-Confederate soil. The New South was certainly not a paradise

for the fine arts or for liberal thought. Atlanta was able for a number of years to support the Metropolitan Opera for a week each year, but the season drew trade from other cities and towns, so the Georgia Legislature placed excessive taxes upon it and these together with the depression killed it for a time. Carnegie libraries appeared in hundreds of towns, but their Athenian façades did not correctly suggest the type of literature that prevailed within. But here the South's imitation of the national pattern was in general quite faithful except that the scale was smaller and the patronage slenderer.

This rather dismal picture applies especially to the period prior to about 1919. Thereafter the South experienced a most remarkable literary renaissance. Numbers of Southern writers—novelists and dramatists in particular—leaped into national and some into worldwide fame. Cutting loose from stereotyped patterns, they set about to utilize the rich variety of human interest material to be found in their region. There was a sort of declaration of cultural independence, of regional as well as personal integrity, remindful of the South's best traditions. In this period also, high school orchestras and bands, civic symphonies, little theatres—notably the "Playmakers" which Professor Koch developed at Chapel Hill—and societies for the development of creative art attracted wide attention for their meritorious productions.

In comparing the culture of the New South with that of the Old, we should not forget that the latter

was never very creative, except in political theory and practical statesmanship. Nor should we overlook the fact that "the Sahara of the Bozart" had oases, even aside from its newer literary and artistic productions. It developed a number of universities that were far superior to any that the Old South ever had. If they taught little Latin and less Greek, as compared with those of earlier times, they taught more of the natural and social sciences. Declining interest in the old *humanities* made way for growing interest in *humanity*. Even amidst the rampant materialism and conservatism of the golden twenties, some of the boldest, most outspoken champions of liberal thought and action, of social and economic reform were in the South.

As the depression of the 1930's deepened, there developed among certain groups in the South a growing tendency to question the validity of some of the New South doctrines. Various plans for the improvement of Southern life were proposed. Passing over the few scattered Communists and the somewhat larger element of Socialists—whose doctrines were in no way distinctly Southern—we find a number of groups who urged their own remedies.

On the extreme right was a small group of intellectuals centering at Nashville, Tennessee, who stood firmly by the idea that the region had grievously erred in ever having had anything to do with modern industrialism. Through somewhat romantic eyes they envisaged an Old South of happy, self-sufficing farms

and plantations; a South which had properly taken care of all elements in its population, generally practiced the amenities of life, and widely cultivated the gentle art of living. So they urged a thorough-going return to the simple and wholesome agricultural life in keeping with the region's best traditions and capable alone of developing its highest social and cultural possibilities. Taking a line from "Dixie" they declared in chorus "I'll take my stand!" (for the Old South's way of life).[25] Commercialized agriculture, however, they would discourage, and to this end John Crowe Ransom, one of the leaders of the group, insisted that a progressive tax be levied upon this kind of enterprise and that a corresponding freedom from taxation be allowed the sort of agriculture which had for its main purpose self-sufficiency. In this way the depressed and debt-ridden agricultural population might become in very truth "happy farmers." Despite genuine aesthetic feeling and a flair for literary expression, the group by 1935 had made little headway in gathering any very numerous following. Many, however, who did not believe their remedy either possible or desirable, shared their dissatisfaction with the existing system and were in sympathy with some of their ideals.

Some of these, accepting industrialism as inevitable, and if properly managed desirable, would counterbalance it by having a large proportion of the proletariat rooted again to the soil. This group was not confined to the South but found its most enthusiastic adherents in that section. From it sprang a proposal

that the government should initially endow tenants and share croppers with farms of their own and give them from thirty to fifty years in which to repay the purchase price, with interest rates but slightly in excess of those which the government had to pay. This idea seems first to have been urged upon the Roosevelt administration by Dr. Frank Tannenbaum, a severe but sympathetic critic of the South. It was embodied in a bill introduced in the Senate in February, 1935, by Senator Bankhead of Alabama. Though national in scope the measure was intended primarily as an attack upon the evils of the cropper system in the South. It would offer opportunities somewhat similar to those of homesteading, which Southerners had never to a great extent enjoyed. It was further urged that croppers thus endowed with homesteads be aided by the various state departments of agriculture and land-grant colleges in learning how to farm primarily for a living, producing only enough cash crops to pay for such things as they were obliged to purchase, plus taxes, interest and amortization on their mortgages.

Another group, of which Dr. A. E. Morgan of the Tennessee Valley Authority was typical, urged that the Southern subsistence homesteader might obtain his necessary cash by engaging in hand industries or by being located sufficiently near to a factory to have part-time employment. Along with the plan for subsistence farms went a program of rural electrification whereby much of the drudgery of the old time farmer would be eliminated. One enthusiast for this idea de-

clared that the electric pump with its cleansing, cooling and thirst-quenching powers might well supplant the fireplace as a family center. The desirability of such a program had been widely recognized, but its feasibility in connection with subsistence farming has been questioned. Even at the very low rates proposed by Mr. David Lilienthal, an associate of Dr. Morgan, it would take considerable cash income to pay for the electrical appliances and the current consumed.

A group of Southerners, of whom Professor Claudius Murchison and Mr. Peter Molyneaux were prominent spokesmen, insisted that the tendency of recent administrations toward economic nationalism should be put in reverse.[26] Pointing out that about half of our cotton crop and a third of our tobacco was marketed abroad, they called attention to the obvious truth, which we have referred to above, that we could not continue to export large surpluses without receiving payment in goods or services. In demolishing the economic fallacies of the mighty of the nineteen-twenties, they were widely commended by thoughtful people, but in seeking an actual reversal of the old policies—a lowering of tariffs, conclusion of trade agreements, and a cessation of the export of capital—they found themselves in a more difficult position. It seemed clear that if we should lose our foreign markets for cotton and tobacco we would be faced with the grave problem of what to do with the millions of people who were engaged in the production of these export surpluses.

The Roosevelt administration was not unaware of the dilemma and set about to find some scheme whereby it could negotiate agreements with individual nations which would take portions of our agricultural surpluses in return for goods that would not compete with our exports. By the mid-thirties, however, such efforts had been largely in vain and the prospects for ultimate success were not bright.

In the meantime the South had received its full share of Federal Relief funds, civil and public works, and considerable cotton and tobacco benefit payments. Business men in the region, though raising their eyebrows at the huge sum involved and the possible strain upon government credit, looked forward with hope in the summer of 1935 to the advantages to accrue to their region from the expenditure of four billion dollars of Work Relief funds. Here and there business men could be found who were responsive to the ideas of dissident groups, but in the main they were simply looking forward to a restoration of "prosperity" along the old lines. The focus of their thoughts was profits. To obtain profits, wages must be held down, overhead costs must be cut, and little government regulation tolerated. Complaints were heard against the processing taxes as applied to cotton and tobacco, and many manufacturers hoped that the Supreme Court would declare them unconstitutional on the same general principle it had recently applied to the NRA. But Southern statesmen in Washington were not so wholeheartedly against such taxes as

were those from other regions, New England in particular, for the disadvantages were more than offset by the advantages in the South ; while in New England it was all give and no take. Southern business men, however, had not absorbed the idea of regional planning to an extent at all comparable to those of New England. When Mr. Hugh McRea, of North Carolina, sought to organize a Southern Economic Council along lines similar to those of the New England Council he found little response.

Social scientists in the South, on the other hand, were doing a great deal of thinking. At meetings of the Southwestern Social Science Association, The Southern Economic Association, the Southern Political Science Association, and conferences sponsored by the Southern Regional Committee of the Social Science Research Council, the problems of the South received the earnest consideration of the outstanding professors and students in these fields. Out of this interest grew the Southern Regional Study, for which the present volume is primarily intended as a sort of historical preface. The study was made under the direction of Professor Howard W. Odum and is published under the title, *Southern Regions of the United States*. Presenting a vast panorama of significant facts and illustrated with several hundred maps and charts, it seeks to picture the South's inherent capacities for economic, social and cultural development–its physical and human resources and potentialities; the extent to which these have been utilized or abused ; the ef-

fects of worldwide upheavals and the crisis which they brought upon the South in particular; and, finally, the general lines along which regional planning should be developed.

The South is rich in resources and capacities but exceedingly poor in its methods of developing them. Reckless, planless exploitation have led to distress and dilemma and may lead to starker tragedies—unless we set about intelligently (and quickly!) to conserve what is left and revamp our social economy in the light of a changing world order. Virginal forests improvidently destroyed in the age when resources were "boundless" may yet be partly restored. Fertile topsoil allowed to wash into the rivers and seas is gone, but at least we may seek to conserve what is left. Farm tenants and croppers, little better than peons in "normal" times, hard-hit by the depression, and in many cases further degraded by the policies of the AAA, may be raised to the status of yeomen if not gentlemen farmers by adequate rural credits, effective coöperation, and intelligent social planning. Wage-earners with standards of living commensurate with production possibilities could absorb much of the embarrassing surplus of factories and farms.

The new regionalists are not unaware of the question of foreign markets. These should be revived as far as possible. But at best the growing production of cotton abroad along with the rise of substitutes must permanently curtail the production of the staple in the South. A partial solution of this problem would be

to grow more of the food and feedstuffs of which there has been both underproduction and underconsumption in this section heretofore. Diversified but not strictly subsistence farming should be the aim for the homesteader type. He should produce for home use and local markets primarily. Money crops would not disappear, nor would intersectional and international trade. Much of the production for home and community use under such a plan would be a net gain to living standards. More dairy and poultry products added to the diet of anaemic croppers and mill hands, more and better clothes and household goods need not ultimately injure outside producers. Subsistence farmers, even in the narrower sense of the word, would be better off than millions of croppers have been for two generations.

The new regionalism urges the revival of agrarian culture and its reintegration in the national pattern. It urges the South in particular to shake off its inferiority complex, cultivate self-criticism, and regain its cultural self-reliance.

Will Southerners have the courage, collective intelligence and persistence to attain such ends within the framework of the existing order; or will they continue to tolerate misery and discontent until overtaken by a new invasion, this time of Communists or Fascists? The answer is the responsibility of Southern leaders of thought and industry.

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[11] Frederick L. Olmsted, *A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States*, p. 138.

[12] From *John Brown's Body*, pp. 161-62. Published by Farrar & Rinehart, Inc. Copyright, 1927, 1928, by Stephen Vincent Benét.

[13] In some regions overseers were not usually employed

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A SELECT LIST OF FURTHER READINGS

Extended bibliographies on various phases of Southern history are easily available to the student. A number of them appear in works listed below. Hence it is deemed unnecessary, and also out of keeping with the scope of this book, to present here an exhaustive list. The following titles may be helpful to those in quest of further reading on particular topics.

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